

Divine operation and human response : a comparison  
between Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of the  
Pauline perspectives and certain elements in recent  
Indian thought.

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

B.E.T.S.	Bulletin of Evangelical Theological Society.
H.T.R.	Harvard Theological Review.
LXX	Septuagint.
N.T.S.	New Testament Studies.
Th. D.N.T.	<u>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.</u>
The Expos. Times	The Expository Times.
Th. N.T.	<u>Theology of the New Testament.</u>

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this thesis is in the first place to institute a comparison between certain elements in recent Hindu theology, i.e. concepts of human freedom, transcendence, regeneration of the self and history and the kind of thinking which Bultmann in the Christian tradition represents. Secondly, it is to suggest the relevance for Christian apologetics of the recovery of the Pauline understanding of the God-man relationship.

This study is therefore designed to examine the question whether the over-playing of the man-ward aspect of religious experience as exemplified by both Bultmann and recent Hindu thinkers is the best approach to the philosophy of religion. For example, can Christian anthropology really underemphasize the divine operation in the individual's faith-decision? This study attempts to indicate that in view of the universal impotence of the human will to decide for God Paul's consistent insistence on the divine operation (which is nothing less than the Spirit of God, the power of the historical community) is a straight answer to the above question.

This thesis takes account of the fact that while for Bultmann "genuineness of life" is a gift from God - the last word to man is not what he can and should do but what is done to him, - for the Hindu apologists of modern times, as of the past, true selfhood is the outcome of self-discipline and self-purification.

While it brings to light how close Bultmann and neo-orthodox

Hindu thinkers come in their insistence on 'personal history' over against 'world history', this study suggests that as in Pauline anthropology 'personal history' and the cosmic perspective are not mutually exclusive.

Because both Bultmann and recent Hindu theologians adhere to an anthropological approach to the philosophy of religion and consequently lay unwarranted emphasis on the limitation of language about God, i.e. of a rational explanation of the ontological status of the ultimate being, this thesis maintains that as in Paul there is a genuinely theological concept of reality underlying much of what he says about man and his existence.

A final section deals with the question of the relevance of the Pauline view of the God-man relationship to the forms of thought of modern Hindu theology.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study of Bultmann's existentialist theology with special reference to his understanding of faith and meaning of history is two-fold: a) to show that certain basic presuppositions of his theology have been foreshadowed in recent Indian thought; b) to bring out the relevance of Pauline anthropology to that of modern Hindu theologians. The wealth of literature in the light of Bultmann's thought testifies to the cumulative effect of his writings. Undoubtedly many will accept his account of N.T. theology with relief, if not with enthusiasm. That is to say his intellectual integrity and the breadth of his N.T. scholarship brought into clear focus the genuine substance of the Gospel. And this has been widely accepted as providing a model for theological thought of today.

The evolution of his thought over the years may well be divided into three major productive periods: (i) The development of his early thought from liberal origins, from which he gradually moved away, his becoming the wholehearted champion of the historical-critical research into the Gospels resulted in a very thought-provoking and an ingenious study, The History of the Synoptic Tradition in 1921;<sup>1</sup> (ii) his encounter with Barth, and the dialectical theology; (iii) and his eventual

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, The History of the Synoptic Tradition, tr. John Marsh (Oxford, 1963).

movement towards what we now call the 'existentialist theology'. It is probably correct to say that the latter, namely 'existentialist theology' was prefigured in the former two for he used Heidegger's existentialist philosophy for the clarification of ideas already present to his mind. Bultmann's dialectical strand of thought came out in his 'Autobiographical Reflections': "It seemed to me that in this new theological movement, as distinguished from 'liberal' theology out of which I had come, it was rightly recognized that the Christian faith is not a phenomenon of the history of religion, that it does not rest upon a "religious a priori" (Troeltsch), and that therefore theology does not have to look upon Christian faith as a phenomenon of religious or cultural history. It seemed to me that, distinguished from such a view the new theology correctly saw that Christian faith is the answer to the Word of the transcendent God which encounters man, and that theology has to deal with this Word and with the man who has been encountered by it".<sup>1</sup>

Both Barth and Bultmann were concerned to repudiate any claims on man's part to have God at his disposal. It is precisely because of this influence of the dialectical theology in its detailed application that natural theology "which has somewhat extravagantly been called "the Sick Man of Europe", "<sup>2</sup>, appears to have been called in for severe criticism, if not bypassed. It is now generally admitted that while the

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1. The Theology of Rudolf Bultmann, ed. Charles W. Kegley, (London, 1966), p. XXIV.

2. Kai Nielsen, "Can Faith Validate God-Talk?", *Theology Today*, Vol. XX (1963-64), p. 159.

existentialist and dialectic idiom has continued to characterize Bultmann's thought Barth held that "there can be no such thing as 'natural theology' or 'theological anthropology'. The analogia entis must be rejected, since it reduces God to a philosophical category, a human creation".<sup>1</sup>

While our century marks the period in which in almost every field of learning there has been constant stress on the human, the historical, and the empirical, and the metaphysical and cosmological aspects have disappeared, Bultmann felt no qualms about appropriating Heidegger's analysis of human existence, which, in his opinion, is the best account available of man as a historical being who exists by decision. It is from this point of view that we can best understand Bultmann's view of the relationship of philosophy to theology. His own words are: "In this case, theology ..... does not simply take over some philosophical system of dogma, but rather lets itself be referred by philosophy to the phenomenon itself; it lets itself be taught by the phenomenon, by man, whose structure philosophy seeks to disclose".<sup>2</sup>

It is from this presupposition that Bultmann proceeds to show that Paul's theology is but anthropology. He therefore advocates the idea that propositions about the past and the future, about the miracles of Jesus or the future resurrection and judgment of mankind are irrelevant to the genuine offence of the Gospel and this is presupposed in his oft-

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1. J.R. Williams, "Heidegger and the Theologians", The Heythrop Journal, Vol. XII (1971), p. 263.

2. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith, tr. S.M. Ogden (London, 1961), p. 95.

quoted statement: to exist authentically is to be free from one's past and open to one's future.<sup>1</sup> Hence his programme of demythologizing calls for a reinterpretation of the mythical aspect of the N.T. teaching. He thus vehemently argues that "If the truth of the New Testament proclamation is to be preserved, the only way is to demythologize it".<sup>2</sup> He adds: "The real purpose of myth is not to present an objective picture of the world as it is, but to express man's understanding of himself in the world in which he lives. Myth should be interpreted not cosmologically, but anthropologically, or better still, existentially".<sup>3</sup> That these assumptions are closely linked to his dialectical theology can be seen from the following statement: "The real purpose of myth is to speak of a transcendent power which controls the world and man ...".<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, he presents N.T.theology as being Kerygmatic theology and in so doing he locates revelation exclusively in the preaching of the Church. It is from this point of view that he reacts against the idea of God as acting in history as traditionally understood. He affirms: "When we speak of God as acting, we mean that we are confronted with God, addressed, asked, judged, or blessed by God".<sup>5</sup>

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1. See Primitive Christianity In Its Contemporary Setting, tr. R.H. Fuller (London: New York, 1956), p.189, History and Eschatology. (Edinburgh, 1957), p.145.
  2. Rudolf Bultmann, Kerygma and Myth I, ed. H.W. Bartsch, tr. R.H. Fuller (New York, 1961), p. 10.
  3. Ibid., p. 10.
  4. Ibid., p. 11.
  5. Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus Christ and Mythology (London, 1960), p. 68.

Bultmann explains all these basic presuppositions in a compressed and clear style and with cogency. These presented to me the challenge of an unclimbed mountain especially when I began to wonder whether his anthropology is by any means the only clue we need to interpret Pauline perspectives. The principal question which kept recurring in my mind as I read his works is whether he did justice to the complexities of Paul, his whole scheme of concepts. To put this question more sharply, how does Bultmann interpret Paul's concept of the Spirit? Is it, on his account, merely another name for "the possibility of a new life which has to be appropriated by a deliberate resolve"? If the answer to this question is in the affirmative will it not be correct to say that by reason of his emphasis on one's decisions in his historical existence Bultmann virtually eliminated Paul's presupposition of the function of the Spirit in the individual's act of faith? My close examination of the passages wherein Paul speaks of the Spirit gives me the clue for protesting against Bultmann's interpretation of Paul's teaching on the Spirit. And this clue becomes clear in the course of our study. This theme in Pauline anthropology is important for our tackling the question whether the activity of the Spirit is a necessary element in the individual's act of faith.

In Bultmann's language it is the individual who must awaken himself to the possibilities of life because in every moment slumbers the possibility of being the eschatological moment. It is not God or the Spirit who awakens man to the possibili-



ties of life. If this is what he continually insists on will it not be fair to say that he plays down the role of divine operation in the individual's decision of faith? It is true that Bultmann understands faith "as grounded in the paradox of the eternal coming to be in time, a paradox which is an offence to the reason, and can only be believed in by 'the virtue of the absurd'"<sup>1</sup> and thus must be believed for no external reasons. But it may be pointed out at the outset that in so far as Bultmann underemphasizes the Pauline perspective on the Spirit's function in the individual's faith-decision the present study undertakes to investigate the question whether certain basic presuppositions of his anthropology have not been anticipated in the anthropology of modern Hindu theologians.

Most books on Hinduism mainly concentrate on the Vedanta and show an overwhelming interest in the quintessence of the rest of the "six systems"<sup>2</sup> of Indian philosophy. Few books have been written dealing with the revolutionary religious thought of renascent Hinduism. Still fewer books have actually made an attempt to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of Hindu theology in its renascent form. But this lack is now made up by the fine studies of Prof. V.S. Naravane, Prof. P.T. Raju, and Prof. B.G. Gokhale on the modern basic philosophical trends which helped to undergird the emerging national life and upon

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1. William Nicholls, Systematic and Philosophical Theology. (Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 170.

2. Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta.

which cultural progress ultimately rests. V.S. Naravane's book, Modern Indian Thought, can be regarded as an exhaustive treatment of the subject, particularly with regard to the religious thought of the great thinkers of modern India. These writers have brought into clear focus the thought-forms of Hinduism of the period between the beginning of the nineteenth century and the middle of the twentieth century.

The modern reformers selected for this comparative study have discovered not only a new sense of the meaning of history but also the importance and relevance of social reform. For that very reason, their religious thought concerns itself with an explication of the traditional idea of self-realization - the individualistic idea of salvation from a new dimension of life. That is, "the quest for salvation as a lonely pilgrimage to God neglects the clamouring social demands of life without which the individual cannot gain fulfilment",<sup>1</sup> as Dr. S.J. Samartha puts it. In the course of our study of recent Indian thought, we allow the votaries of this religion to speak for themselves and thereby see how close some of the dominant concepts in their religious thought come to Bultmann's system.

But to introduce the subject of this comparative study it may be said that just as Bultmann maintains that man is related to himself; he is responsible for himself so also recent Hindu theologians advocate the idea that man is totally and

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1. Dr. S.J. Samartha, "The Quest for Salvation and The Dialogue between Religions", *International Review of Missions*, Vol. LVII (1968), p. 428.

wholly responsible for himself. Just as Bultmann understands Transcendence in terms of the contingent stuff of human living more specifically, as an 'encounter' in one's concrete existence, so also Tagore defines Reality, the Brahman of the Vedanta as "humanized". Tagore declares: "Reality is human, it is what we are conscious of, it is that by which we are affected, that which we express".<sup>1</sup> Bultmann's concept of self-understanding may be said to be strikingly similar to modern Hindu theologians' interpretation of the traditional idea of self-realization "the contraction of self in desire into the expansion of soul in love"<sup>2</sup> in Tagore's language. Just as Bultmann emphasizes the idea that to know Christ is to know his benefits, and not to look into his nature so also Vivekananda understands religion in terms of experience when he affirms: "It [religion] is not to know, in the ordinary sense of the word, not intellectual understanding, not a mere rationalistic comprehension of the real things, nor mere groping in the dark, but intense realization [the word realization is peculiarly Hindu terminology], much more real than this world is to our senses".<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the idea of "personal history" appears prominently in the writings of recent Hindu theologians. This may suggest that Bultmann's historiological presuppositions may be similar to those of the modern Hindu writers. Bultmann affirms: "Because of this insight

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1. As cited by V.S. Naravane, Modern Indian Thought (Bombay: London, 1964), p. 145.

2. Tagore, Personality (London, 1921), p. 98.

3. As quoted in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, ed. R.C. Majumdar (Calcutta, 1963), p. 295.

/The insight into the historical nature of man/ we shall always interpret every historical source as a genuine historical phenomenon, that is, in the light of the presupposition that in it a possibility of human existence is grasped and expressed".<sup>1</sup> S. Radhakrishnan also holds the view that "man not only is but he knows that he is. His being is open to himself" and "he can fling a flaming torch into the darkness of the future".<sup>2</sup> In short, Bultmann's basic presuppositions, namely his concepts of Transcendence, human freedom, self-understanding and history may be said to be the governing principles of this comparative study between his scheme of thinking and recent Indian thinking.

With this in mind, I propose to develop the theme of this study under the following four heads:

1. One of the important questions to be investigated in this study is whether Bultmann's hypothesis that Paul's anthropology is the key to the whole of Paul's thought is the whole story. We can do this only by undertaking a re-thinking of Paul's perspectives. Hence the first section of the first chapter is devoted to re-articulating the Pauline perspectives on anthropology and Christology. This section includes a critical analysis of the biblical basis to show how vital the function of the Spirit is in Pauline anthropology. The second section of this chapter concerns Bultmann's understand-

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, tr. L.P. Smith (London, 1969), p. 150.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, Religion in a Changing World (London, 1967), pp. 67 and 153.

ing of anthropology with special reference to his interpretation of faith and history.

II. In the second division of this study we focus our attention on a crucial movement of thought towards what we can now call Eastern Existentialism in modern Indian thought. Under this head we make an inquiry into existential elements in recent Indian thinking as exemplified by Rabindranath Tagore, Prof. S. Radhakrishnan, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and Swami Vivekananda.

III. The third part of this thesis consists of a comparison of the anthropology of recent Indian thinking with that of Bultmann and also a critical evaluation of the same.

IV. The final section of this study deals with the question of apologetics: in this we seek to show the relevance of the Pauline idea of the God-man relationship to the anthropology of modern Hindu thought as a necessary supplement to the current Indian Christian Theology.

## CHAPTER I

- (a) Paul's perspectives on anthropology and Christology.
- (b) Bultmann's understanding of anthropology with reference to his interpretation of faith and history.

Although there are notable exceptions, namely Käsemann's approach, of late most of our standard guides to the study of Paul have been increasingly emphasizing his anthropology and making that the centre of his theology. There is no denying that one of the finest modern studies of the Christian view of man is found in Bultmann's N.T. theology, especially in his study of Paul. But the important question is whether the Bultmannian hypothesis of Paul's anthropology as nothing less than the key to the whole of Paul's theology is the whole story. In an attempt to answer this question the present study undertakes a re-thinking of Paul's perspectives. Out of the many-layered frame of reference of Paul's theology three of his dominant concepts, namely (i) Anthropology, (ii) Christology and (iii) the Spirit's role will be discussed at length in the first section of this chapter. But before we enter upon the detailed study of these major themes of his theology we must give attention to some of the essential elements of his thought which can be summarily set forth as follows: Perhaps Paul held that the revelation of his Son, specially given to him, Gal. 1:12,16 (implying that Paul had recognized him as divine and as the exalted Son of God as compared with his experience of

meeting with the risen Jesus on the Damascus road as per the accounts in Acts 9:1 ff. 22:3f. 26:10 ff.) had to be taken as self-evidencing proof for his explanation of his apostleship as being on the same par with those of the apostolic band. On the same score, he would claim to have had a share in the early resurrection appearances, cf. I Cor. 15:3 ff.

A further reflection may strengthen this point. That is, Paul had perhaps understood the event of his call as a genuine theophany as he uses the similar language to that of the LXX for theophanies. Compare I Cor. 15:8: ὡφθῆ καὶ μοι. And in Gal. he speaks of revelation within himself 1:16: ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί. The apocalyptic teaching of Judaism has exerted its influence in Paul's thought, for instance, in his repeated reference to "this age" and his use of the terms, "things present" and "things to come", Rom. 8:38, I Cor. 3:22. The two phrases namely, "this age" and "this world" are interchangeably used, I Cor. 3:18, 19. Also synonymous is the expression "the present time" used in the N.T. only by Paul, Rom. 3:26; 8:18, 11:5; II Cor. 8:14. The present "age" or "world" or "time" is characterized by its transitoriness, I Cor. 7:31, by tribulation and suffering, Rom. 8:18 f, and by its evil nature, Gal. 1:4. Although the present age is one of tribulation, Rom. 5:3, II Cor. 4:17; and also Rom. 8:18 f., "the Christian still rejoices in his hope of sharing in the glory of God", Rom. 5:2, and in spite of his present afflictions, lives with a hope of an eternal weight of glory, II Cor. 4:17, which will one day be revealed,



Rom. 8:18. And also, it has been remarked that Paul was the first theologian of hope. For Paul, the goal of redemption will include not only the individual but also the entire created order. Hence the idea of redeemed and transformed creation is an important concept in Paul's theology. Foerster observes: "The uniting of divided humanity into one new man, Eph. 2:15, is also ἀκτίσεν. The goal is a new creation in antithesis to the totality of this creation..... The full revelation of the new creation, ..... will not come until Christ reveals Himself, Col. 3:4, ..... then Christ will reveal Himself ἀπὸ τοῦ παντὸς τοῦ κόσμου in the totality of the world, and the glorious liberty of the children of God, Rom. 8:21, will be displayed on the mortal bodies of those who belong to Christ, and on all κτίσις".<sup>1</sup> This correlates closely with Dr. J.A.T. Robinson's emphasis: "The process as a whole has a movement and has a meaning: it "works up" to a "goal".<sup>2</sup>

Further, it was axiomatic for Paul that God lays claim to the world as his creation; through Christ's redemptive work all fallen creatures may be saved, Rom. 5:12 ff., for the same is the Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him, Rom. 10:12. The Gospel with its news of the universal saving action in Christ is directed to the whole world, Rom. 3:27 f., 29. God is the God not only of the Jews but also of

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1. Th. D.N.T. III, 1034.

2. J.A.T. Robinson, In the End, God ..... A Study of the Christian doctrine of the Last Things (London, 1950), p. 69.



the Gentiles. Also, the background of Paul's concept of evil forces can be traced to the influence of the apocalyptists who held that the present age had fallen victim to "evil cosmic forces ..... bent on the destruction of mankind and of the world itself".<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, Paul held that the rulers of this age are doomed to pass, I Cor. 2:6. While the powers are said to be under the control of God, they will ultimately be destroyed, cf. Rom. 8:38, and I Cor. 15:24-28. The hostility of these alien powers is expressed not only in their attempt to enslave man to their purpose, Gal. 4:3, but also in their blinding him to the Gospel of Christ who is the likeness of God, II Cor. 4:4. "The evil powers of this age "have taken control not only of man's nature but also of the world in which man lives".<sup>2</sup> And man's own alienation from and hostility to God is viewed as caused by his bondage to the powers of sin and death. This is brought more clearly into view by D.S. Russell when he observes: "This dualistic view of the world which is characteristic of apocalyptic eschatology, finds its expression in a doctrine of the two ages .... Over against 'this age' (Hebrew *ha-ōlam haz-zeh*; Greek *ho aiōn houtos*), with its sin and corruption, is set 'the age to come' (Hebrew '*ha-ōlam hab-ba'*'; Greek *ho aiōn mellon*) in which evil will be routed and wrongs will be set right".<sup>3</sup> Paul was also of the same opinion and he spoke of these powers as if they

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1. D.S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic: 200 B.C. to A.D. 100 (London, 1964), p. 267.

2. Ibid., p. 257.

3. Ibid., p. 266.

were personal powers exercising their dominion over man. (Incidentally, Bultmann explains Paul's statements about man's servitude to the power of sin and death from the standpoint of his (Paul's) use of the Gnostic understanding of those evil forces. As Bultmann puts it: "Paul is able to appropriate the cosmological mythology of Gnosticism because it enables him to express the fact that the perishable "creation" becomes a destructive power whenever man decides in favour of it instead of for God .....".<sup>1</sup> He adds: "This eschatological-historical meaning of "kosmos" and along with it the understanding of man's situation as an enslavement to powers for whose dominion he nevertheless is himself responsible, comes out, finally, in the interpretation of Paul's mythological statements about these powers".<sup>2</sup> What Bultmann contends is that for Paul, man himself has given to it (world) these possibilities of evil).

Paul characteristically brings to clear focus the apparently unresolved opposition between the powers and the transcendental power of God. And yet, he emphatically stresses the incontrovertible truth that the victory of God's transcendental power was unambiguously manifest in and through the death and resurrection of his Son, II Cor. 13:4, and as a result the Christian is liberated from the power of the elemental spirits of this age, Gal. 1:3-4. Besides, in Paul's theology, "as a creature whose destiny, however, transcends the world, man is

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Th. N.T. I, tr. Kendrick Grobel (London, 1965), p. 230.

2. Ibid., p. 257.

seen as the focal centre of the struggle between the forces of evil and the power of God".<sup>1</sup>

It is in this context that we have to probe more deeply into the structural presuppositions implied in Paul's anthropology. There is, indeed, much to be said for the view, as held by Paul, that man is in bondage to the death-dealing powers of this age. Paul declares: "man stands under sin's power", ὑφ' ἁμαρτιαν, Rom. 3:9; cf. Gal. 3:22; he is under sin (ὕπο τῇ ἁμαρτιαν), Rom. 7:14 sin is said to be that which has come into the world as "an infiltrator", εἰσέρχεται, Rom. 5:12, and finally killed him, Rom. 7:11, 8:10. For Paul, among sinners there is no distinction, Rom. 3:9 ff. and as exact opposite of this, among the believers there is no distinction either. In Paul's understanding sin leads to death and is given a radical meaning. In his view it is far more serious than the perversion of life, and ultimately leads to its (life's) negation. The tragic state of sinful mankind (whether the Jew or the Gentile), more specifically, "the radical fallenness of man" was poignantly portrayed by Paul in Rom. 1:18-3:20. (Incidentally, one of Bultmann's special contributions to the history of N.T. theology is that he, among other things, brings to the fore the fallen state of man. For him, every moment of man's will, even his move to get out of his predicament is still a movement of fallen man - he is incapable of extricating himself from his plight - only an act of God can effect this transition).

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1. Stuhlmacher, "Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus," in *Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, 87 (1965) esp. pp. 228-29, cited by V.P. Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul (New York, 1968), p. 135.

Further, it will be noted that Paul's understanding of sin hinges upon his two basic concepts, namely "the flesh" and "the law". For Paul, sin found its lodgement in "the flesh" which, as V.P. Furnish puts it "is its quisling power within man's own existence when man makes "the flesh" rather than God the object of his confidence and hope".<sup>1</sup> It is important to note, however, "that the Gnostic answer that the divine core of man has been tragically overpowered by the sinister forces which seduce the senses is not Paul's answer",<sup>2</sup> as Schweizer observes. For Schweizer, "the typical Pauline conjunction of flesh and sin is the same as that already found in the O.T."<sup>3</sup> Besides, Paul viewed "boasting" as something far more serious than the attitude of conceit in relationships with others. In his view, it is an essentially sinful mode of being of the self-righteous Jews who boast in the law, Rom. 2:23. In short, for Paul, sin is "boasting" (καυχῆσθαι, καυχῆμα, καυχασθαι). Paul characteristically brings into focus that the "boasting" represents man turning away from God, "to the creation and to one's own strength".<sup>4</sup> Sin (boasting) means "a misconstruing of the human situation",<sup>5</sup> a refusal to recognize that life is a gift from God, I Cor. 4:7.

Further, it is to be observed that in his understanding of the relation of the law to sin Paul never entertained the idea that the law itself is to be identified with sin, Rom. 7:7. Never-

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1. V.P. Furnish, op. cit., p. 137.

2. Th. D. N.T. VII, 133.

3. Ibid., p. 132.

4. Rudolf Bultmann, Th. N.T. I, p. 241.

5. Ibid., p. 242.

theless, he held that the law played an important part in sin's "reigning", which consequently led to death. Paul declares: "Death spread to all men because all men sinned", Rom. 5:12. Paul recognized that the law held out a prospect of leading men to life; the commandment was ordained unto life, Rom. 7:10. But the law proved itself in Israel's experience powerless to do this thing, to make alive, Gal. 3:21. To Paul the law appeared "a form of administration which issued in death", II Cor. 3:7. For Paul, the law had mocked men, as the Cambridge N.T. scholar C.A. A. Scott comments. The law "as a method of attaining the righteousness which God required"<sup>1</sup> had failed. Hence Paul was unalterably convinced of its ineffectiveness and powerlessness to help Israel to establish any standing of their own in the sight of God.

But how does Paul explain the connection between the law and sin? In Rom. 5:20 Paul says: the law came in to increase the trespass. "I should not have known sin" he declares "except through the law, Rom. 7:7a. I should not have known covetousness had the law not said: "thou shalt not covet", 7b. By this statement Paul makes it clear that sin is prompted by the commandment. And Paul goes one step further to say that sin works by means of the law: "but sin finding opportunity in the commandment wrought in me all kinds of covetousness", 8a, hence the power of sin is the law, I Cor. 15:56; and

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1. C.A. Anderson Scott, Christianity According to St Paul (Cambridge, 1927), p. 43.

also instead of bringing life the law led to death, Rom. 7:10, for sin, finding opportunity in the commandment deceived me and by it killed me, Rom. 7:11. To put it summarily, in Paul's opinion, the law deals out nothing but death. V.P. Furnish aptly phrases it: "If the flesh is sin's 'host', then ~~the~~ law is sin's agent".<sup>1</sup>

Paul's understanding of man's salvation stems from his view of Christ's death: Christ had died unto sin once for all, Rom. 6:10 (τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ὡς ἑαυτὸν ἑφάπαξ). Christ died at the right time, Rom. 5:6. Christ had provided for man the absolute freedom which is 'security' in God from the obligation of shifting slaveries. That is, first of all, any deliverance from these slaveries that is to be achieved must be achieved by God since man is powerless to help himself as he is enslaved to sin and cannot break free from these chains that bind him. The upshot of all this is as Paul insists, that man's true freedom lies in his "belonging to God or "the Lord" - namely, freedom from "flesh" and "sin" (Rom. 6:15 ff; 7:5 f").<sup>2</sup> This presupposes the fact that man, apart from Christ, outside faith, remains in bondage to the powers of the present evil (sin and death). Thus Paul held fast to the objective reality of the Christ-event, even apart from faith. (Incidentally, it is to be noted that Bultmann also shares this idea, he recognizes exclusively the "pro me", only he insists that "the salvation - occurrence is nowhere

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1. Theology and Ethics in Paul, p. 138.

2. Rudolf Bultmann, Th. N.T. I, p. 244.



present except in the proclaiming, accosting, demanding, and promising word of preaching".<sup>1</sup> For him, the objective factuality of the redemptive event becomes real only when the past act is made present. What he contends is that..., "it [proclamation] directs man to his own humanity. For this humanity grace is valid. And the grace of forgiveness is simply the fact that the history in which we exist is conditioned by the 'crisis' in Jesus Christ".<sup>2</sup>

Further, Paul also holds that once the "transition" in the individual's life takes place, his life is a "standing in grace", Rom. 5:2. However, for Paul, grace, to be sure, is understood to have a "power" of its own, quite apart from man's acceptance or rejection of it, because God's grace "reigns" with power. Hence the idea of salvation made available in the Christ-event belongs unquestionably to the apostle's eschatological perspective. That is, as Foerster points out "*ἡ ἰσχυρία* and *ἡ ἐξουσία*, in contrast to justification, reconciliation and redemption, refer to future, eschatological salvation".<sup>3</sup> This means that the problem of eschatology and its realization, in Paul's theology, are not unrelated to the equally great issue of Gospel and Law.

(i) Paul's anthropology: The above brief survey of some essential elements of Paul's thought shows that Paul has developed

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Th. N.T. I, p. 302.

2. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 140.

3. Th. D. N.T. VII, 993.

a particular understanding of man and of his place in the universe. That is, in our analysis of his thought we have had occasion to notice that he characteristically explains the nature of man in terms of his fallen state - his bondage to the powers of sin and death as a result of his desire to trust in "the flesh", that is, trusting in himself while dishonouring his creator. In so far as he explains the God-man relationship in terms of the Creator - the creature, his thinking is viewed as in keeping with the O.T. idea of God as the Creator of the world. It would then be logical for us to assume that by reason of his Hebrew background the apostle's anthropology could probably be seen within the rather traditional framework of Judaism. That is, his perspective on anthropology strikes a note of Judaistic understanding of God whose righteousness is manifest pre-eminently in Christ's death and resurrection. His conception of justification, as V.P. Furnish says, "is related first of all to his [Paul's] affirmation of the righteousness and power of the covenant God who creates, upholds, and redeems".<sup>1</sup> The other worldliness of what God has revealed is expressed by the question in I Cor. 2:9: "what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived", let alone the awesomeness of the power of God over the universe, Rom. 1:20. And it is as our Father that he decreed the form of our redemption. The mission of the Son to "redeem" is accomplished. While we were sinners

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1. V.P. Furnish, op. cit., p. 146.



we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Rom. 5:10. Note Paul's own statement: For historical and theological reasons, he declares, Christ has made me his own, Phil. 3:12; and elsewhere he says, 'even as I have been fully understood', I Cor. 13:12b. Further, in his explanation of Abraham's righteousness of faith Paul undertakes an extended refutation of the theory of works of the law and what Paul S. Minear points out is that there "the apostle's argument rested upon the comparability of God's promises and God's action in these two events [death and resurrection] and upon the resulting correspondence in the character of faith".<sup>1</sup> The upshot of all this shows that there is, indeed, a concept of man in Paul. However, his concept of man can be interpreted in a variety of ways. One like Bultmann can say that Paul's concept of man fairly and squarely reflects the whole of his theology. This view has not gained general acceptance. The critical consensus, on the other hand, suggests that such an hypothesis is certainly not the whole truth as Paul's concept of man is unquestionably inseparable from his doctrine of God, and of his dealings with the world. Even in the passage Rom. 6:1-11 which will doubtless be regarded as the key stone of the arch of Paul's understanding of man under grace his Christological statements are found not wanting (note Paul's reference to Christ as having been raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, being alive to God, and ever living). It is precisely in this sense that Prof. E. Schweizer makes the point with great

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1. Paul S. Minear, The Obedience of Faith. (London, 1971), p. 55.

insistence that "Christ's death was the eschatological fulfilment of God's history with mankind ..... If it is true that this formula ['with Christ'] goes back to the apocalyptic hope of an eschatological life with Christ, it guards us from dissolving Paul's statements into mere anthropological descriptions".<sup>1</sup>

And also, Paul declares: "....., you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God", I Cor. 6:11. This verse perhaps explains Paul's telling argument to show that the spirit is an agent of justification through baptism and we can also use this verse as typical of many to establish the familiar fact that Paul thinks of man in relation to the Spirit. Moreover, Paul's concept of man is indubitably inseparable from his Christology. That Paul rather integrates Christology with anthropology than subordinates the former to the latter is brought more clearly into view by A.R.C. Leaney when he comments: "in I Cor. 15 Paul shows clearly how firmly the resurrection is part of his doctrine of man: for consider these well-known words and judge if they are not both part of his eschatological Christology and no less-of his doctrine of man ..... As in Adam all men die so in Christ all will be brought to life, (v. 21 f). Man is subject to death but in a state bestowed on him by God he is destined for life. This is eschatology and Christology, even ecclesiology. It is certainly also anthropology".<sup>2</sup>

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1. E. Schweizer, "Dying and Rising with Christ", N.T.S., Vol. XIV (1967-68), p. 10.

2. A.R.C. Leaney, "The Doctrine of Man in I Corinthians", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 15 (1962), pp. 396-97.

This now inevitably brings us to the discussion of the second of Paul's dominant concepts. (ii) Christology: The Kerygmatic message focuses on the Lordship of Jesus and the redemptive significance of death and resurrection or on humiliation and exaltation as much in Paul's preaching as in the preaching of the apostles. Paul's own kerygma however, is concerned not so much with the incarnation and exaltation as with the cross and resurrection. Paul no less than the first preachers of the kerygma, saw the significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus as the accomplishment of God's ultimate victory over the power of sin and death. Compare Rom. 6:4; I Cor. 15:53-57 also Gal. 1:3-4 with Acts 2:24, 33, 36; 10:34-44. (Incidentally, it is to be observed that the problem of the Christology of the Palestinian Church and that of the Gentile Church is still unsolved as there are many problems when we look below the surface of the solutions offered by Dr. J.A.T. Robinson and Prof. R.H. Fuller).<sup>1</sup>

Further, for Paul, God's act of redemption is connected with raising of Christ from the dead, cf. Rom. 10:9. This implies that the redemptive event, as Paul viewed it, has happened before our decision. That is, what Paul clearly asserts is that God's act in Christ was redemptive because God decreed and acted for the salvation of mankind. The beginning and end of the divine will have been revealed in this event, cf.  $\epsilon\tau\omicron\iota\mu\alpha\tau\epsilon\nu$  I Cor. 2:9 and its parallel  $\tau\tau\omicron\upsilon\omega\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\rho$  in I Cor. 2:7. (Incidentally, we have made it clear already that Prof.

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1. See R.H. Fuller, The Foundations of New Testament Christology (London, 1965), p. 184f.

Bultmann also fully shares this concern of Paul, while he incessantly stresses that the past lives in the present through proclamation. This is why Paul can speak of the Gospel as itself the power of God unto salvation). It will also be remembered that the Easter faith, as Paul understood it, did not arise in vacuity, but as the response to what it understood to be certain prior actions of God himself - Paul declares: "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith is in vain I Cor. 15:17 - Christ is the first fruits of them that slept, V.20, - Christ was crucified in weakness but lives by the power of God," II Cor. 13:4. And this makes the kerygma and faith what they are. To put it differently, the Church did not create belief in the resurrection of Christ; the resurrection of Christ, historically speaking, created the Church by calling faith into being. Hence, the objective factualness of the event was the subject of Paul's most profound reflection. To put it more plainly, it has become the springboard as it were, of Paul's Christology. It was from this axiom that Paul developed the other various views; to name a few, Christ became the servant for the circumcised, Rom. 15:14, God making him to be sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God, II Cor. 5:21, Christ became a curse for us in order to redeem us from the curse of the law, Gal. 3:14, Christ who offered himself Gal. 1:3-4, Christ Jesus who died, ..... who is at the right hand of God, Rom. 8:34.

(iii) The Spirits' role:

The other theme that demands our attention at this point is that of Paul's understanding of the functional relation of the Spirit to the risen Christ. At the very outset, it will be observed that many found the concept of the Spirit in Paul's theology far from easy, hence many divergent views on the subject have been expressed. R. Jewett's recent admirable book entitled Paul's Anthropological Terms: A study of their use in conflicting settings, (Leiden, 1971) was devoted to a full-dress debate on the question of the role of the Spirit, especially in the discussion of the end-time passages in Paul's letters. Bultmann conducted his exposition of the Pauline passages relating to the Spirit with learning and ingenuity and came to the conclusion that Paul's theology of the Spirit became imbued by the gnostic substance idea of the spirit. Quite obviously, the novelty of his approach to the problem of the function of the Spirit in the believer's act of faith has raised some fresh issues. In point of fact, Burton a half century ago defined the Greek's view of the spirit as of substance as follows : "Πνεῦμα is .... a term of substance, not of functions, and a name not of God or the human soul, but of the substance of which both are composed ....."<sup>1</sup> We will however, have an occasion to discuss Bultmann's detailed treatment of Paul's understanding of the Spirit in the second half of this chapter when we explain his anthropology. But in the

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1. E. de W. Burton, A Critical And Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle To The Galatians (New York, 1921), p. 487.

first place let us turn to make a careful consideration of Paul's perspective on pneumatology.

For Paul, the Spirit is no less Christ's Spirit (Phil. 1:19; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6) than God's Spirit (1 Thes. 4:8; Phil. 3:3; II Cor. 3:16). Paul explains that the manner in which Corinthian Christians obtained faith was due to the demonstration of the power of God and of the Spirit and that their faith rests in the power of God, I Cor. 2:4b-5. The function of the Spirit is thought to have peculiar power because it comes from God, cf. I Cor. 2:12b, (τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ). Let us now make a careful examination of the passage in I Cor. 2:7-12 in which Paul describes the πνεῦμα as the miraculous power which mediates supernatural knowledge, "we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ, τὴν ἀποκρυμμένην" v. 7 in distinction from human wisdom, ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας v. 13. It will be noted that I am as anxious as any one to allow that "Paul is here adopting the same understanding as that widespread in the community as influenced by the O.T. and also by Hellenism, which means that for Paul, the miraculous power, πνεῦμα determines both the content and form of preaching and it is thus perceptible only to the spiritual. But what is the content of this spiritual instruction? Paul's answer is formally gnostic: τὰ βῆθη τοῦ Θεοῦ, I Cor. 2:10. In content, however, it is not all gnostic: God's saving work at the cross. The content is τὰ ὅπο Θεοῦ χάρις θεντα ἡμῖν. According to I Cor. 1:24 the σοφία Θεοῦ which is revealed by the πνεῦμα in I Cor. 2:7-10 is simply Χριστὸς ἐσταυρωμένος, I Cor. 1:23; 2:2; this is



confirmed in I Cor. 2:8. The cross is seen to be the already accomplished crisis which divides the new creation from the old. With the Hellenists, then, Paul regards the Spirit as the power which takes man out of this aeon and sets him in that aeon, cf. I Cor. 2:6. But he also carries out a decisive correction. The union of the believer with the *Kyrios* is not granted in pneumatic materiality. It is granted with the knowledge that the *πνεῦμα* gives of the One who was crucified for him".<sup>1</sup> And Schweizer quotes with approval Prof. Dodd's comment: "The participation in the Spirit is participation in Christ and not merely in a gift dispensed by Him, though neither, Rom. 1:4, nor II Cor. 3:17 adequately supports, since both could be taken in a purely naturalistic sense".<sup>2</sup>

Since this judgment appears justified it seems probable that Paul's main concern was to emphasize not so much the supernatural power of the spirit as found in Hellenism as the Spirit's functional relation to Christ. This view Prof. E. Schweizer vigorously advocates and he points out that "the substantial is regarded as only a form of thought for the power which alone is vital to the Israelite".<sup>3</sup> And this concept is further amplified in the statement of W.D. Davies: "Surely it is not the materiality of the ruach that is to the fore in the Old Testament, but its quality as power, vitality, activity or

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1. Th. D. N.T. VI, 425.

2. Ibid., p. 425, fn. 4.

3. Ibid., p. 425.

life; its essence is power not substance. Much more to our purpose is the fact that in Rabbinic Judaism the Spirit is often conceived in material terms".<sup>1</sup> This, then, makes it clear that the idea of the Spirit as power is an inbuilt notion of the Hebrew mind and it is not an imported a priori concept of reality. Moreover, according to the O.T. teaching he who bears the Spirit is always referred wholly and utterly to God's work. T.W. Manson remarks that "just as in the O.T. the ruah Yahweh is the heavenly correlative to man's ruah, so in Paul the Spirit of God stands over against the spirit in man".<sup>2</sup> That Paul makes this distinction between God's Spirit and human spirit is another element in his theology and this will . . . be discussed later on.

It is then clear, as Schweizer argues that "the believer does not live by his substance but by God's action at the cross. There is thus created the possibility of an understanding of the Spirit in which  $\piνεμα$  as power establishes the existence of the believer and is no longer regarded as a purely supplementary miraculous power, though without becoming the substantial possession of the  $\phiυση του γουενος$ . In this light it is easy to see why the extraordinary nature of the manifestations can no longer be a decisive criterion. The fact that the knowledge is supernatural no longer rests on the fact that it is received or taught ecstatically and built logically or non-

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1. W.D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (London, 1948), pp. 183-4.

2. T.W. Manson, On Paul and John, ed. Matthew Black (London, 1963), p. 36.



logically. The miracle is that a man may believe that God is for him in Jesus Christ. The content of this supernatural knowledge is not disclosure of mysteries of the heavenly world, but the divine act of love effected at the cross or the divine sonship granted to the believer thereby, and thus the  $\piνεμα$  can be called specifically the  $\piνεμα της πιστεως$ , II Cor. 4:13".<sup>1</sup> Besides, it is suggested that the statement of Paul "out of faith with regard to the Spirit, we wait for the hope of righteousness", Gal. 5:5,  $\piνεματι εκ πιστεως$  could also be construed in connection with II Cor. 4:13. Dr. N.Q. Hamilton goes to the extent of saying that "and here I suggest that with relation to  $εκ πιστεως$ ,  $\piνεματι$  is a dative of respect in that it is true that the believer may have faith in view of the action of the Spirit ....."<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, Schweizer argues that "in I Cor. 12:3, in distinction from all subsidiary characteristics, knowledge and confession of Jesus as the  $Κυριος$  is the gift which gives evidence of the  $\piνεμα$  as such. Only in appearance is this contradicted in the statement Gal. 3:14 (and 5:5?) according to which the Spirit is received  $δια$  or  $εκ πιστεως$ . [The Gen. of Gal. 3:14 is appos., Lietzmann G1., ad loc.]. In its permanent antithesis to  $εξ εργα νουμου$  this statement is simply to the effect that no human merit has secured the Spirit. He adds in the footnote: "That perhaps Gal. 3:2, 5 uses the odd  $ακοη πιστεως$

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1. Th. D. N.T. VI, 425-26.

2. N.Q. Hamilton, The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul, (Edinburgh: London, 1957), p. 34 fn. I.

(not ἀκοῆς πίστεως) instead of πίστεως because strictly this is already the work of the πνεῦμα..... The fact that πίστεως is dominant in Rom. 2-5, and πνεῦμα in 6-8 shows that the one, as the antithesis to the works of the Law, is the precondition of the new life, whereas the other is its possibility".<sup>1</sup> "Similarly, when the πνεῦμα is the power of sanctification (Rom. 15:16, I Cor. 6:11, also II Thes. 2:13), one cannot say whether Paul's emphasis is that the Spirit sets us in God's saving action and justifies us, or that he enables us to live thereby in concrete obedience".<sup>2</sup> The former is stressed in I Cor. 6:11, the latter in I Cor. 6:19. All this exegesis explains an important element in Paul's theology of the Spirit that to say the Spirit is God's power operating in the individual's act of faith is to establish more than a probability.

Furthermore, Paul's citations from an unknown book in I Cor. 2:9 and from Isa. 40:13 in I Cor. 2:16 are in perfect harmony with the apostle's intention in I Cor. 1:18-3:20, namely to set forth that there is only one way to the profound secrets of God's revelation in Jesus Christ and it is through God's own Spirit. As for the background of Paul's use of the Spirit, the Spirit is clearly the revelatory agent, cf. 1Q5 IV: 2-6, 1QH XII:11f, XIII:18 f. This lends further support to the contention that the πνεῦμα functions here as stated in

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1. Th. D. N.T. VI, 426-27 fn.

2. Ibid., p. 431.

I Cor. 2:6-11 as a revelatory agent. Also, that Paul has perspective of his own on the function of the Spirit as over against the Corinthians' view of the Spirit as substance is evident by reason of the linguistic usage peculiar to him in this passage and in a parallel passage, Rom. 8:12-27 where the various functions of the Spirit are listed as follows: I) the Spirit is revelatory agent; II) in both sections the human spirit is introduced in addition to the divine spirit; III) in both places and only here in these passages Paul uses the word  $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\upsilon\chi\omega$ .

This, then, makes it clear that from a careful consideration of Pauline idea of the relation of the human spirit to the divine spirit one gets the impression that the former is introduced into his theology in addition to the latter. R. Jewett also argues: "A distinction between the human and divine spirits is worked out for the first time ..... it was a Pauline creation".<sup>1</sup> Besides, R. Scroggs argues that "it is important to note that the Hebrew of Isaiah XL.13 quoted in I Cor. 2:16 has ruah, which the LXX translates by  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  (and only here of all appearances of ruah). Did Paul have the Hebrew in mind, since he has been talking about the  $\pi\upsilon\sigma\mu\alpha$ ? The possibility is perhaps enhanced by I Cor. 7:40, where to give support for his judgment on marriage Paul asserts that he has the  $\pi\upsilon\sigma\mu\alpha$   $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  (here again the Spirit is revelatory)".<sup>2</sup>

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1. R. Jewett, Paul's Anthropological Terms, p. 451.

2. R. Scroggs, "Paul:  $\zeta\epsilon\phi\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\pi\upsilon\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ ", N.T.S., Vol. XIV (1967-68), p. 53.

Moreover, it will be noted that just as in the O.T. the Spirit of God is viewed as empowering men to perform acts of which otherwise they would not be capable, so also in Paul's thinking the Spirit is viewed as empowering man. Think of what he says: "now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And this is the source of the "utterance of wisdom ..... of knowledge ..... faith ..... gift of healing ..... working of miracles ..... prophecy ..... ability to distinguish between spirits ..... various kinds of tongues ..... interpretation of tongues", I Cor. 12:4. cf. also, I Cor. 2:10, 12b, 13, 14; Gal. 3:5; I Thes. 5:19. The first product of the Spirit in human life is "that love becomes the central motive of our own moral being .....",<sup>1</sup> as Dodd comments.

In our exegesis of I Cor. 2:6-12 we showed that Paul held that the Spirit bears a functional relation to Christ and is also revelatory agent. A detailed exegesis of the passage II Cor. 3:7 ff. also may strengthen this point. In Paul's understanding the Spirit plays the role of revealing the Christ who is identified with the Spirit himself, II Cor. 3:17-18. In his explanation of the benefits of the Christ-event Paul seems to lay great emphasis upon the completeness of the event, the communication of which is carried through the operation of the Spirit who gives life, II Cor. 3:6 as opposed to the death and condemnation which were the results of the old dispensation.

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1. C.H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans (London, 1932), p. 74.

The exegesis of the passage which equates the Spirit with the Lord Himself is, of course, contested. Schweizer's exegesis on this passage stands out, in my opinion, as one of the most satisfactory attempts so far made by an impressive body of theologians, namely K. Prumm, B. Schneider, D.W. Davies, C.H. Dodd,<sup>1</sup> and of late, J.D.G. Dunn. In verses 6 and 8 the ministry is depicted as that which is controlled by the πνεῦμα, not the γράμμα. It is then shown that the unbelieving Jew still lives under the veil which is done away only ἐν Χριστῷ, V. 14. Turning to the Κύριος (= Χριστός in V. 14 as always the One who was crucified and is risen, Rom. 5:6, 8: 6:4 ..... The word appears where there is reference to the work of redemption, Rom. 8:35, 15:7; II Cor. 3:14....<sup>2</sup> takes the veil away. The statement that this Κύριος is the Spirit connects two trains of thought. The exalted Κύριος to whom Israel must turn instead of to Moses, cf. Rom. 10:4 f. I Cor. 10:2 is identified with the πνεῦμα. This shows that turning to Him means turning to the new διακονία in the πνεῦμα. It is not wholly true that, while Paul ascribes the same functions to Christ and the Spirit, he does not elsewhere equate them, cf. I Thes. 1:5; II Cor. 12:9; Phil. 4:13 [from the viewpoint of the idea of δύναμις and that Christ became a πνεῦμα ὑποτασσόμενον, I Cor. 15:45]. In so far as Christ is regarded in His signi-

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1. K. Prumm, "Die Katholische Auslegung von 2K. 3:17a in den letzten vier Jahr Zehnten", *Biblica*, 31 (1950), 316-345; 32 (1951), 1-24;  
 B. Schneider, *Dominus autem Spiritus est* (1951);  
 W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, p.196 fn. 1  
 and  
 C.H. Dodd, *History and The Gospel* (London, 1938), pp. 55-57.

2. *Th. D.N.T.* III, 1090.

cance for the community in His powerful action upon it, He can be identified with the  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ . In so far as He is also Lord over His power, He can be differentiated from it just as the I can be distinguished from the power which goes out from it ..... It is declared expressly in I Cor. 15:45 that Christ became a  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$   $\gamma\omega\tau\tau\omicron\iota\omicron\upsilon$  in the resurrection. Nor can appeal be made to Rom. 1:4 in favour of a different view. It is thus maintained that the exalted Christ is the  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  and that turning to Him entails entry into the sphere of the Spirit. Whosoever comes to Him comes into this sphere. If  $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  are distinguished in 17b, this simply makes it plain that v. 17b is not asserting the identity of two personal entities.  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  is defined as the mode of existence of the  $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ . Where there is reference to the  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$   $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\upsilon$ , His mode of existence is depicted, and this means the power in which He encounters His community".<sup>1</sup>

In a similar vein, one can argue that even though it is true to say that Paul took over the other cardinal conceptions such as the Messiahship of Jesus, his death 'for our sins', and the Lordship of Christ, yet the equating of the Spirit with Christ, of Christ with the Spirit, appears to have been original with him, in short, this discovery was his own. What is implied in this equation is that the relation between Christ and the Spirit does spell not so much of a personal identity as of an equivalence of function. It is perhaps in this sense

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1. Th. D.N.T. VI, 418-19.



that Prof. C.A.A. Scott becomes the forerunner of the critical consensus when he observes: "The Spirit and the exalted Christ alike make themselves felt as  $\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ , a divine force of personality working on the personality of the Christian cp. I Cor. 2:4 (hendiadys); I Thes. 1:5 with II Cor. 12:9 and Phil. 4:13".<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, for much the same reasons as are explained in Schweizer's ingenious exegesis on the passage, II Cor. 3:7 ff, Dr. N.Q. Hamilton argues "that the identity here posited is not ontological, an identity of being, but dynamic, an identity which occurs in redemptive action ..... The Spirit portrays the Lord so well that we lose sight of the Spirit and are conscious of the Lord only. This suggests the following pattern of redemptive action: from the Lord - through the Spirit - to the believer".<sup>2</sup> Thus far we have seen the strength of the main line of argument based on this passage and there seems little doubt that the role of the Spirit is to be construed in terms of its functional relation to Christ. Further, Dr. J. D.G. Dunn quotes with approval what Schildenberger says ..... "the Spirit is the Unveiler, the Revealer (I Cor. 2:10; 12; 13:3; cf. Eph. 1:18)".<sup>3</sup> Thus once the functional identity of the Spirit and of Christ is assumed, it is easy to see why Paul holds the view that the Spirit's special function is to bring to completion the creative purpose of God as the  $\alpha\rho\beta\omega\nu$  (II Cor. 5:5; 1:21; cf. Phil. 1:19) of the new order

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1. C.A. Anderson Scott, Christianity According to St Paul, p. 260.

2. N.Q. Hamilton, The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul, pp. 6-7.

3. J.D.G. Dunn, "II Corinthians III. 17 - 'The Lord is the Spirit'", Journal of Theological Studies New Series Vol. XXI (1970) p. 320.



brought about by the Christ-event. Gunkel made a convincing comment that the whole life of the Christian is an effect of the  $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\sigma\mu\alpha$ .<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps this is explained by the fact that "long before the Spirit was a theme of doctrine, He was a fact in the experience of the community. This is the basis of the marked variety and unity of the N.T. statements".<sup>2</sup> There is, however, a problem before Paul or any exegete who heavily falls back upon Paul's own understanding of the Spirit for formulating any form of the concept of the role of the Spirit. Schweizer raised the problem thus: "As in the O.T. and Judaism as a whole, the Spirit is not necessary to salvation but is a power for additional deeds. Understood thus, the Spirit naturally becomes a sign of something still to come, of the real things. Thus in the quotation from Joel in Acts 2:19-21 the outpouring of the Spirit is clearly depicted as the beginning of the eschatological catastrophe, and [according to Heb. 6:4b] the wonder-working  $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\sigma\mu\alpha$  Heb. (2:4) is a foretaste of the good things of the world to come. This means, however, that the Spirit is only a singular prelude to the parousia, a welcome but basically unnecessary sign of the real thing which is yet to come. For salvation is not to be discerned in the mere presence of all kinds of miraculous powers".<sup>3</sup>

This problem is probably more acutely set forth by the whole

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1. cf. H. Gunkel, Die Wirkungen des heiligen Geistes, (Göttingen, 1888), p. 75.

2. Th. D. N.T. VI, 396.

3. Ibid., p. 415.

approach of Bultmann's exegesis of Paul's letters, more specifically, of his understanding of the Spirit. It is in the light of this problem that the discharging of my burden of proof of the necessity of the role and function of the Spirit in the matter of faith becomes accentuated. It will be pointed out that this problem provides no ground for denying the truth of the matter that before the parousia the Spirit as the divine power at work, more accurately, the historical power, the phrase from Prof. E. Schweizer's essay on the  $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\sigma\mu\alpha$  in Th.D.N.T. VI, pp. 389 ff., was the fact of experience in Paul himself before it became a theme of any affirmation made by him. I intend to indicate that this fact of experience is an answer to the problem in respect to the "relation between the message of the Spirit and that of the crucified, risen and coming Lord".<sup>1</sup> "This is the decisive question for the primitive Christianity".<sup>2</sup>

It will be remembered that the mission of the crucified and Risen Lord was entrusted to Paul - the Gospel he preached came to him through the revelation of Jesus Christ. He declares: "he who has set me apart before I was born ..... was pleased to reveal his Son to me", Gal. 1:16. How did this revelation of the Risen Lord and even of his own self-understanding come to him? Was it not through the divine intervention in the course of his life previously controlled by outright Judaistic

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1. Th. D.N.T. VI, p. 415.

2. O. Michel, Das Zeugnis des N.T. von d. Gemeinde (1941), p. 65, cited in Th.D. N.T. VI, 415.

thinking and the deep influence of the tradition of his fathers, Gal. 1:12-16? This divine intervention essentially belonged to the sphere of the Spirit, whether you call it divine operation or supernatural phenomenon, which actuated Paul's own conversion experience. Schweizer rightly remarks that "this power is not anonymous or unknown. It is identical with the exalted Lord, once this Lord is considered, not in Himself, but in His work towards the community. This is not new in Paul ..... for in Ac.. too, the Spirit is not merely the  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron$ , 2:23 in distinction from the Pauline or Johannine  $\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\iota\nu\omicron\varsigma$ , John 14:26.  $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\tau\tau\upsilon\epsilon\omicron\mu\alpha$  can alternate there".<sup>1</sup>

At the risk of repetition, it must be clearly stated that the Spirit is fundamentally the power which sets a man in God's saving work in Christ, thus making impossible any trust in his flesh. What is known is known through the Spirit and this means that the Spirit makes man to know what is given by God, I Cor. 2:12. What is given is the salvation - deed.

b) Bultmann's understanding of anthropology with reference to his interpretation of faith and history.

Bultmann's understanding of anthropology can be seen in his oft-repeated statement: "Every assertion about God is simultaneously an assertion about man and vice versa".<sup>2</sup> Perhaps

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1. Th. D.N.T. VI, 433.

2. Rudolf Bultmann, Th. N.T. I, p. 191; Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 63 where he affirms: "The question of God and the question of man are identical"; and Faith and Understanding, I. pp. 55-56.

one can say that the nature of God and his activity are only indirectly explained by Bultmann; but man and his possibilities of self-understanding is a dominant concept in his scheme of thinking. As is well known, Liberal theology had shifted the balance of emphasis to historical-critical research drawing its critical standards from the contemporary world outlook. Since with Bultmann, revelation and existential faith are strictly correlative the fides quae creditur as the acceptance of an orthodox doctrine produced from outside and the fides qua creditur as a religious experience or act from within are not mutually exclusive. That is, these two explanations of the Christian experience are not separate enterprises, as held by Schleiermacher. Further, even though Bultmann develops his own critical historical method drawing his theological presuppositions from the point of view of modern man's picture of himself and his world similar to the viewpoint of liberal theology, yet his concept of "a point of contact in man" radically differs from what liberal theology says to the question.

Bultmann insists: "Rather is man in his existence, taken as a whole the point of contact. And for this reason it is also true that in man there is no faculty in man-no religious faculty possessing a special receptivity for God's Word".<sup>1</sup> He strongly upholds Augustine's view that "human life is - consciously or unconsciously-impelled by the question about God".<sup>2</sup>

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Essays Philosophical and Theological, tr. James C.G. Greig (London, 1955), 137 (cited as Essays).

2. Rudolf Bultmann, Kerygma and Myth. I, p. 192.

And also, for him "we are also given two possible ways of understanding of ourselves: from what is done or from the doing.<sup>1</sup>

What Bultmann emphatically defends is the idea of the historical existence of man as embodying both the question of God and at the same time the answer to it. His contention is that man must raise the question about himself because he "has been called in question" by God, who is at the same time the answer to man's question about himself. He argues that "man as such, the whole man, is called in question by God ..... But to know this judgment is also to know it as grace, since it is really liberation ..... Man then knows that the question is also the answer; for it is only God who can so question him. And he knows that the answer is primary. A question so radical cannot originate from man, from the world. But if the question is asked by God, then it originates from the claim of God on man. Man is called".<sup>2</sup> His argument is that the natural man and philosophy are already aware of the questionableness of existence. He also maintains that "the question of his own real being which engages the attention of man ..... is the point of contact for God's Word".<sup>3</sup> But this point of contact, for Bultmann, is not given "before hand" but in the very proclamation of the Church is this point of contact "uncovered". It is worthy of note that the theme of the disclosure of the divine answer to man's question about God occurs with striking

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 255.

2. Ibid., p. 46-47, and pp. 316 f.

3. Rudolf Bultmann, Essays, p. 136.

frequency in Bultmann's writings. Also, his fundamental conviction is that the only knowledge that man has of God is what is disclosed in the Bible. To that extent, Prof. Bultmann is at one with Prof. Barth. But Barth has little sympathy for Prof. Bultmann's proposition of "Prior understanding of the self", since the former holds that the word of God should be given absolute primacy in the hermeneutic process. In contrast, Bultmann holds that there is an understanding of himself given to man prior to the word. This position Bultmann uncompromisingly defends taking his stand on the existentialist philosophical propositions. This can be clearly seen from the following statements: "Faith does not depend on a resolution about which I can deliberate. Faith is immediate decision; that is, in hearing I have already decided how I hear".<sup>1</sup> What he implies is that the decision about the how is made possible by my self-understanding, the understanding of my situation, but it is not caused by it. The above statement is further qualified by him on this wise: "The text does not give me knowledge of any astonishing discoveries, ..... But possibilities of my own self are disclosed to me which I can understand only insofar as I am open to my possibilities and will to let myself be open ..... Understanding, therefore, is always simultaneously resolve, decision".<sup>2</sup>

It is from this point of view that Bultmann criticises Barthian theology severely, saying that it inculcates an attitude of

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 139.

2. Ibid., p. 158.



blind surrender, at the price of intellectual sacrifice; the reason for this statement is the fact that Barth lays so much stress on faith as based upon itself alone, and on the sovereign right of the word apart from "the understanding which is the guide for all my activity".<sup>1</sup> He further explains that "there is no recipe for procuring lost freedom. There is only the appeal to the individual to reflect on his freedom and his self ..... Every individual must make the venture for himself: there is no guarantee. But the future can only flourish on the ventures of individuals". He insists: "In these decisions he develops; he gains his character, ..... He would have to experience an encounter which presents him with the possibility of decision against his old self in favour of his new self. He does experience this encounter in hearing 'the word of divine grace ....., whereas the Christian view is open for the fullness of the possibilities of life in history".<sup>2</sup>

This makes it clear that Bultmann understands man as a free and responsible being. That is, in keeping with existentialists' view he puts every man in possession of himself as he is, and places the entire responsibility for his existence upon his own shoulders. This is really determinative in so far as man is understood as "an independent self who can win or lose himself in decision".<sup>3</sup> This idea of man winning or losing himself in decision is further qualified: "Man today can understand himself in relation to God only as a person who is add-

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Essays, p. 261.

2. Ibid., pp. 325, 309-10.

3. Rudolf Bultmann, Kerygma and Myth I, p. 12.



ressed by God precisely in his being as person. This means that the only divine speaking and acting he can understand as important and of concern to him are such as encounter him in his personal existence - and, in fact adhere precisely to it".<sup>1</sup> Whatever the reasons may be which are urged in support of this statement, whether one can be so certain as Bultmann seems to suggest that "man can adhere to it", is another question which will be taken up at a later stage of our examination of his demythologizing of the Kerygma. However, suffice it to say for the present that Bultmann emphatically stresses that the "possibility of understanding the Word coincides with man's possibility of understanding himself".<sup>2</sup> For him, these two possibilities are not only basically related to each other but also are one and the same.

Furthermore, Bultmann believes that "Man's being is removed from his own control, it is risked continually in the concrete situations of life and goes through decisions in which man never chooses something for himself, but chooses himself as his possibility".<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere he writes: "I do not attain to my existence in the sphere of what happens generally, but rather in a concrete situation, in the here and now, in my individual responsibility and decision, where as I hazarding myself I can gain or lose myself, ...."<sup>4</sup> This he explains

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, "Zum Problem der Entmythologisierung" in Kerygma und Mythos II, ed. H.W. Bartsch (Hamburg, 1952), p. 182, cited by S.M. Ogden, "Bultmann's Project of Demythologization..", Journal of Religion, Vol. XXXVII (1957), p. 160.
  2. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 302.
  3. Ibid., p. 149.
  4. Rudolf Bultmann, Essays, p. 78.

from the standpoint of the kerygma by saying that "... It is in this world of concrete historical happening that God and what he asks, what he demands and what he gives are to be encountered. God is not manifest to the thought that soars away into what is beyond Time in the eternal orders - and that is where to the Greek Weltanschauung the  $\sigma\kappa\alpha\nu\delta\alpha\lambda\omicron\nu$  lies .... The quest for the truth is to the Greek search for the disclosure of the world of entities in its totality; to the New Testament it is the question of the demand, or the gift, of the moment".<sup>1</sup>

He further explains that for the Bible "the worth of man is not determined by his human quality or the character of his spiritual life, but simply by the decision the man makes in the here-and-now of the present life ..... Only what a man now does gives him his value".<sup>2</sup> The Bible is therefore concerned "that just this necessity of decision constitutes the essential part of his human nature".<sup>3</sup>

All this perhaps explains his understanding of Kerygma and his great concern and preference for the existentialist philosophy of existence. And it is in this latter sense also he differs from Barth. This can be seen from his letter to a friend wherein he writes: "In any case, Barth's background is the neo-Kantianism of Cohen and Natrop, who also continued to influence me for a long time; he has - unfortunately! -

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Essays, pp. 83 f.

2. D. Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus and The Word, tr. L.P. Smith (London, 1935), p. 54.

3. Ibid., p. 52.

nothing to do with phenomenology".<sup>1</sup> All this goes to show that Bultmann lays a consistent emphasis on the existential understanding of faith. He affirms: "Only such statements about God are legitimate as express the existential relationship between God and man".<sup>2</sup> But this position is not without problems. We admit that any statement about God as Creator and still more as Redeemer has some kind of reference, even if only implied to man and nevertheless, it must be asserted that there are statements which directly refer to God and not to man and his possibilities of decision.

The lasting merit of Bultmann's understanding of man is that although he makes use of Heidegger's existential analysis in order to bring to man's consciousness the meaninglessness of his existence he yet asserts that to ask for a meaning of life is to ask for God and to ask for God is the same thing as to ask for myself.<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere he points out that "if our existence is grounded in God and it is non-existent outside God, then to apprehend our existence means to apprehend God".<sup>4</sup> This is perhaps the heart of Bultmann's concern, hence, he untiringly stresses this idea in a number of instances. He observes: "If a man will speak of God he must evidently speak of himself".<sup>5</sup> He understands God's uniqueness from the standpoint of man.

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1. In a letter of 1926, cited in W. Schmithals, An Introduction To The Theology of Rudolf Bultmann, tr. J. Bowden (London, 1967), p. 17.

2. Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 69.

3. cf. Ibid., p. 53.

4. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 63.

5. Ibid., p. 55.

He asserts: "His being (existence) is understood aright only when it is understood as significant-for-man being; hence it is not understood aright unless at the same time man's being is also understood as springing from God and thereby orientated towards Him".<sup>1</sup>

Understood from this point of view Bultmann's interpretation of faith could be summarily set forth as follows. In his understanding of it, faith no longer needs the props of objectivity. For him, "Faith insists not on the direct identity of God's action with worldly-events, but, ..... on the paradoxical identity which can be believed only here and now against the appearance of non-identity".<sup>2</sup> In this connection it may well be proper for us to explain what Bultmann means by the demythologized Kerygma. For him, "the word is kerygma, personal address, demand, and promise; it is the very act of divine grace. Hence its acceptance-faith-is obedience, acknowledgment, confession".<sup>3</sup> He explains that "the fact that "to believe" is "to obey" as in the O.T. is particularly emphasized in Heb. II ..... How naturally  $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$  includes obeying may be seen from the use of  $\pi\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  rather than  $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$  for receiving the Christian message ..... Paul in particular stresses the element of obedience in faith. For him  $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  is indeed  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\eta$ , as comparison of Rom. 1:8; I Thes. 1:8 with Rom. 15:18; 16:19, or II Cor. 10:5 f. with 10:15 shows. Faith is for Paul  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu \tau\omega \epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\iota\omega$ ,

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 229.

2. Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 62.

3. Th. N.T. I, p. 319.

Rom. 10:16 ..... He [Paul] coins the combination ὁ Πακοῦν πιστεῶς, Rom. 1:5 ..... ΠΙΣΤΙΣ is understood here as acceptance of the Christian kerygma. It is thus the saving faith which recognizes and appropriates God's saving work in Christ ..... Kerygma and faith always go together ..... Since Jesus Christ was made the Κύριος by His history, acceptance of the kerygma also includes acknowledgement of Jesus Christ as the Κύριος ..... In its original and true sense, however, faith in Jesus Christ is not obedience to a Lord who is known already. Only in faith itself is the existence of this Lord recognized and acknowledged ..... It [faith] believes on the basis of kerygma ..... It is always the foundation of faith. God has instituted the λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς with the Christ event, II Cor. 5:18 f. For this reason faith in the kerygma is inseparable from faith in the person mediated thereby. In the sense that it believes on the basis of the kerygma, faith is always a "venture". He adds: "Rom. 10:9 proves clearly that to believe in Jesus Christ is to acknowledge Him as Lord ..... so that ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ, being followed by baptism, brings into a personal relation to Christ ..... ΠΙΣΤΙΣ is to be understood as acceptance of the Christian message in, e.g. Rom. 1:5; 3:25; 10:17 .....: Rom. 1:8; 11: 20 ("thou hast attained thy status by believing"), ..... Along the same lines ἀπιστία is rejection of the Christian kerygma, Rom. 11:20, 23".<sup>1</sup>

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1. Th. D.N.T. VI, 205-12.

He further affirms: "Paul understands faith primarily as obedience; ..... this is shown by the parallelism of two passages in Romans: "because your faith is proclaimed in all the world" (Rom. 1:8) and "for your obedience is known to all" (Rom. 16:19). Thus, he can combine the two in the expression ὁπᾶκοηπιστεως("the obedience which faith is", Rom. 1:5)... Compare further, I Thes. 1:8: "your faith in God has gone forth everywhere" and Rom. 15:18:" ..... to win obedience from the Gentiles" ..... "They [the Jews] did not submit to (=obey) God's righteousness", and 10:16: "They have not all heeded (=obeyed) the Gospel".<sup>1</sup> Bultmann argues that "the message itself, then, can be called πίστις. It thus follows that, since πίστις is the divinely demanded relation of man to God, and is as such the divinely opened way of salvation, Paul can use the word in the sense of a norm of principle, e.g., when he contrasts νόμος and πίστις as the two ways of salvation (Rom. 3:31; 4:14), .....".<sup>2</sup>

It is indeed of particular interest to note that the idea of radical obedience of the individual to the saving grace of God received a classic expression in Bultmann's writings wherein faith means surrender of worldly and personal security. To turn aside from our present to God's future, from fear and anxiety to freedom, to freedom for others, to love of God and our neighbour. In a word, man is called to accept the escha-

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 314.

2. Th. D.N.T. VI, 213.



tological existence of the new creature, the authentic and truly natural form of human existence. His own words are: "Man does not belong to himself; for there is for man no absolute belonging - to - one's-self but belonging to God or "the Lord" is man's freedom-namely, freedom from "flesh" and "sin" (Rom. 6:15 ff.; 7:5 f)".<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he observes: "True freedom is only to be found in constraint ..... the recognition of a true authority presupposes man's humility, and a radical openness for the power speaking to him from the sphere of the transcendent: ..... only in such humility and openness ..... in radical renunciation of one's own claim and one's own capacities - is the meaning of the transcendent understood at all".<sup>2</sup> And also for him "faith is the surrender of his man's previous understanding of himself, the reversal of the direction his will previously had ..... Faith's attitude is the radical opposite of the attitude of "boasting": nor can faith take credit for itself - that would be "boasting" ..... For the purpose of God's salvation - deed is: "that no flesh may boast before God" (I Cor. 1:29 tr)".<sup>3</sup>

Besides, for him "acceptance of the divine grace is because this grace encounters man in the paradoxical form of the cross of Christ, i.e. because the divine act of grace is also the judgment executed at the cross on man, on his sins, and also on his striving for righteousness or wisdom. Faith

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 244.

2. Essays, p. 322.

3. Th. N.T. I, p. 315.



is thus the obedient acceptance of the divine judgment on man's previous self-understanding. The knowledge imparted in the kerygma and appropriated in faith embraces not only knowledge of God's act in Christ but also a new self-understanding on man's part.  $\Pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  is the distinctive way of understanding the divine  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$  and hence also of understanding oneself under  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$ . Paul, then, speaks of the knowledge of the believer in a twofold sense. On the one side it is knowledge of the event of salvation through the kerygma, Rom. 6:8 f.; II Cor. 4:13 f.; cf. Rom. 10:14-17. On the other it is the knowledge which discloses itself to faith as a new self-understanding, Rom. 5:3, 14:14; II Cor. 1:7, 5:6; Phil. 1:19".<sup>1</sup>

Judging from the argument of Paul in Gal. Bultmann understands " $\Pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  as man's absolute committal to God, a committal in which man cannot make any resolutions of his own - which would be to remain in the sphere of  $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\alpha$ ..... Equally plain, however is the fact that this committal, is a movement of the will; it is indeed the radical decision of the will in which man delivers himself up ..... In Paul, the character of  $\Pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  as act is expressed on the one side by the fact that he understands  $\Pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  as  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha\gamma\eta$  and on the other quite unintentionally by the fact that, unlike Augustine, he never describes faith as inspired".<sup>2</sup> He adds: "If one does not understand the paradox that  $\Pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  as a movement of the will is the negation of the will itself, the antithesis of  $\Pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  and

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1. Th. D.N.T. VI, 217-18.

2. Ibid., p. 219.



ἐργα ἔργων will easily be misunderstood, as though ΠΙΣΤΙΣ were another work or achievement".<sup>1</sup> And elsewhere he points out that "faith" - the radical renunciation of accomplishment, the obedient submission to the God - determined way of salvation ..... is the free deed of obedience in which the new self constitutes in place of the old. As this sort of decision, it is a deed in the true sense. In a true deed the doer himself is inseparable from it, while in a "work" he stands side by side with what he does".<sup>2</sup>

Bultmann further contends that "faith" is not an "experience", not the "truly religious in religion", ....., not a διαθεσις (prospensity, disposition) or ἀρετή (virtue, excellence). It is not - as if it were the perfected state of the soul - salvation itself. Rather - as genuine obedience - it is the condition for receiving salvation ..... In his [Philo's] thought ..... "Faith" stands at the end "as the goal of life's movement toward God"....., while for Paul it stands at the beginning furnishing the basis for the new life".<sup>3</sup> Moreover, Schlatter's view of faith as trust in God's gracious forgiveness which brings the sinner to the way of the Law is challenged by Bultmann who contends that "the very rarity of the terms "forgiveness of sins" and "repentance" in Paul and the similar rarity of ἐπιστρέφειν ("turn to", - only at I Thes. 1:9 and II Cor. 3:16 in Paul) indicates that the movement of will contained in "faith" is not primarily remorse and repen-

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1. Th. D.N.T. VI, 220.

2. Th. N.T. I, p. 316.

3. Ibid., p. 316.

tance .....; but it is primarily the obedience which waives righteousness of one's own ..... it is evident that "faith" has the character of obedience and is an act of decision".<sup>1</sup>

Bultmann goes on to explain that "'faith" is simultaneously "confession". "Faith" is faith in .....". That is, it always has reference to its object, God's saving deed in Christ. Hence, "confess" and "believe" correspond to each other: "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Rom. 10:9)". And he adds: "Faith, therefore, is not "piety" or trust-in-God in general. Rather it has "dogmatic" character insofar as it is acceptance of a word: "the word of faith" (Rom. 10:8) or "the heard word" (ἀκουή KJ.: "the hearing") of faith (Gal. 3:2, 5). Hence, faith can also be called "faith of the Gospel" - i.e. faith in the Gospel (Phil. 1:27)".<sup>2</sup> For Bultmann, "'faith' which arises from what is heard, (Rom. 10:17), consequently contains a knowing",..... "But since this knowledge can be appropriated only in obedient, comprehending faith, and hence contains an understanding of one's self, knowledge may also appear as arising out of faith. .... Ultimately "faith" and "knowledge" are identical as a new understanding of one's self, if Paul can give as the purpose of his apostleship both "to bring about the obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:5) and "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (II Cor. 4:6 cf. II Cor. 2:14:

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 317. .

2. Ibid., pp. 317-18.

"God .... who .... through us spreads the fragrance of knowledge of Him"). ..... An additional clarification of the character of "knowledge" lies in the fact that "knowing" has its basis in a "being known by God" (Gal. 4:9; I Cor. 13:12)".<sup>1</sup>

With his usual exegetical rigor and distinction Bultmann draws these conclusions, i.e. faith containing a knowing, a new understanding of the self and the same knowledge arising out of faith - these are obviously classic in scale and quality. It is more than likely that these conclusions are the result of his being influenced by the existential scheme of thinking. And also, one cannot fail to be impressed by the fact that he explains "faith" in the plainest possible manner as a "venture" - the movement of one's own will in terms of historical existence and thereby gaining a new understanding of one's self. Further, "faith" for Bultmann, also has, on the other hand, "undogmatic" character in the sense that the word of proclamation brings about "transformation of the hearer's own experience. For the word is kerygma, ...." He argues that "faith" is what it is only with reference to the "grace" which is actively present in the word. In his "confession" of faith, the believer turns away from himself, confessing that all he is and has, he is and has through that which God has done. Faith does not appeal to whatever it itself may be as act or attitude but to God's prevenient deed of grace which preceded faith ..... Though Gal. 3:23-26 sketches the preparation and the "coming" of "faith", what is sketched is

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1. Th. N.T. I, pp. 318-319.

not the individual's development but the history of salvation. The attention of the believer does not turn reflectively inward upon himself, but is turned toward the object of his faith. "Faith", then, as "obedience" is also confession".<sup>1</sup> And as another category of it, faith, as Bultmann points out, is thought to have a peculiar correlative in "fear" "inasmuch as it guarantees the centring of the believer's attention upon God's "grace"." In support of this, Bultmann takes up the experience of Paul on his arrival in Corinth, I Cor. 2:1-5. "He came to Corinth in "weakness and in much fear and trembling" --- so far, that is, as he looked to himself. But since he waived eloquence or wisdom of his own and determined to know one thing only, "Jesus Christ and him crucified, he was effective with a demonstration of the Spirit and power".<sup>2</sup> One can admit that this conclusion of Bultmann from Paul's experience can certainly carry conviction.

He develops this idea still further in that "fear" has not only the negative purpose of destroying false security and directing the believer's attention away from himself towards God's grace which alone supports him (as in Rom. 11:20), but also the positive purpose of making man conscious of his responsibility, which he can assume now that he is no longer under Law but under "grace" (Rom. 6:14)".<sup>3</sup> Bultmann is certainly right in asserting that the man of faith utterly surrenders to God's care and power, waiving all care or power

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 319.

2. Ibid., p. 320.

3. Ibid., p. 321.

of his own and all security that he might be at his own disposal. And that this is rightly so in the case of man under faith does by no means come under dispute and is obviously an intelligible and reasonable affirmation. But taking the centre of the matter into consideration, i.e. the relation between kerygma and the individual's act of faith, Bultmann's explanation of it will lead one to arrive at the idea that from Paul's point of view everything else in the act is ancillary to kerygma. Because, in his argument, "the message itself can be called  $\Pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ ". But, of course, this conclusion of Bultmann is the outcome of his exegetical and systematic presuppositions. Therefore, his explanation of the emergence of faith vis-a-vis the proclamation of the Word is that Kerygma in which God in Christ meets man here and now and offers him a new possibility of understanding his own existence. He insists that man in his exceptional being, "stands between God and creation and must decide between the two".<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he argues that "only the man who knows himself to be a sinner can know what grace is. He only knows himself as a sinner in so far as he stands before God; therefore he can only know of sin when he knows of grace. The sight of God's judgment and God's grace together belongs to the nature of faith".<sup>2</sup> The upshot of all this is that the last word to man is not what he does or should do - or his achievement, but what is done to him. Thus Bultmann's statement "only those who are loved are capable of loving" becomes the articulus stantis et cadentis

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 229.

2. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 51.



theologiae.

All this is very helpful and full of insight. However, the question still remains whether one can be so sure as Bultmann seems to be that the "point of contact" in man vis-a-vis the proclaimed word should be given supreme and sole importance as means of making man readily to be conscious of his standing between God and the creation. If that were all that easy, to be pragmatically true the Church which engaged itself for more than the last two centuries in proclamation of the word in the non-Christian world, say, the eastern countries would have found itself in a different condition. And the non-Christian world would have by now been brought to the saving knowledge of Christ or would have experienced the encompassing reality of God's love. At this point it is worth noticing that students of the history of religions, particularly of Eastern Religions certainly find it not easy to accept the idea that the proclamation of the Word by the Church makes all the difference in the world, because they recognize the fact that the hearers of the Word, by reason of their religious background face with the problem of breaking certain barriers between their way of thinking and the challenge of the Gospel. It will be remembered that even when Paul preached Kerygma we are told that some mocked, some deferred and some believed. However, it is generally recognized that no one should unduly question the legitimacy and positive evangelical intention of Bultmann and his insistence on the power of the proclaimed Word. But its real limitation lies, to my mind, not in its



emphasis on the power of the proclamation or his rationalist presuppositions but in its practicality. It is perhaps in this sense that Bultmann's interpretation of faith may probably need to break out from its scheme of existential thinking to the climate of thinking of the combination of the divine operation and man's decisions in his historical existence.

But Bultmann as a historian contends that divine operation is not something with which history qua history can deal. But how can the historian apply his method to the documents of the Bible wherein a good number of actions are ascribed to non-human causes? Bultmann replies to this question by saying that to find God in miracles would be incompatible with the uniformity and <sup>law</sup> of causation. For him, to speak of God acting in any way observably is to deliver up the faith in wonders (God acting somehow within events) to the criticism of science and in so doing validate such criticism. For him it is highly improbable that God acts "between events". All that he admits is that God acts "within events". He insists: "The only way to preserve the unworldly, transcendental character of the divine activity is to regard it not as an interference in worldly happenings, but something accomplished in them in such a way that the closed weft of history as it presents itself to objective observation is left undisturbed".<sup>1</sup> The implication is that insofar as man is concerned, God's action, in its final form, comes to fulfilment in his personal encounter with God. That is, God meets us when the cross of

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Kerygma and Myth I, p. 197..

Christ is proclaimed to us. That we find God in our own existence and we do not find him in miracles is Bultmann's recurring argument.

Further, Bultmann was not slow to reply to the critics who made much of the absence of the subject of divine action in his programme of demythologization. He writes: "Perhaps we may say behind all the objections raised against demythologizing there lurks a fear that if it were carried to its logical conclusion it would make it impossible for us to speak of an act of God, or if we did it would only be the symbolical description of a subjective experience".<sup>1</sup> The passage which follows these words and the similar passages in Jesus Christ and Mythology, particularly the following one: "God as acting does not refer to an event which can be perceived by me without myself being drawn into the event as into God's action, without myself taking part in it as being acted upon. In other words, to speak of God as acting involves the events of personal existence"<sup>2</sup> obviously indicate that Bultmann takes this apparently formidable objection to the demythologizing programme most seriously. Evidently, his implication in these passages is that his demythologizing does not necessarily warrant the critics' objection since he can speak and speak non-mythologically, of the action of God. In this one can detect Bultmann's insistence on the paradoxical non-identity

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Kerygma and Myth I, p. 196.

2. Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 68.

of God's action and his stress, that is, he is both an evangelist and a historian. Henderson remarks that "as an evangelist, he is constrained to proclaim the action of God. As a historian he cannot accept it as a causal factor in the scheme of things".<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, in his explanation of faith Bultmann points out that "faith as response to the proclaimed word (which is called ἄκοντισμός, "preaching of faith"), like that word itself, is part of the salvation - occurrence, the eschatological occurrence ..... Faith can also be said to "come" and "to be revealed", Gal. 3:23, 25. This, of course, does not take from the concrete "faith" of the individual that decision-character which belongs to its very nature as obedience. Nevertheless, the concrete realization of the possibility of faith in the individual's decision of faith is itself eschatological occurrence. Since the believer experiences the possibility of faith-decision as grace, it is only as a gift of grace that he can understand his decision - his decision ! And because he knows that it is God who accomplishes his willing and doing - his concrete, historical existing in "faith" he is conscious not of being relieved of the responsibility for it but on the contrary of being made responsible for it, Phil. 2:13 f. Thus, Paul can say that faith in Christ is "granted" as a gift, Phil. 1:29 ..... Faith is God-wrought to the extent that prevenient grace has made the human

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1. Ian Henderson, Rudolf Bultmann (Makers of Contemporary Theology) (London, 1965), p. 39.

decision possible, with the result that he who made the decision can only understand it as God's gift; but that does not take its decision-character away from it. Only so does the imperative, "be reconciled to God", II Cor. 5:20 make sense".<sup>1</sup>

From this important statement two basic assumptions of Bultmann come to the fore: (a) by prevenient grace he means grace as an integral part of the proclaimed word - grace as the deed of salvation contained in the encountered proclamation - God's eschatological deed,<sup>2</sup> and "there can be grace only as an event".<sup>3</sup>(b) The salvation - occurrence is to be appropriated as God's gift by the one who makes decision, granted that decision - character is central to the act of faith. Bultmann's explicit exposition of the concept of faith as found in Pauline theology can be digested or subsumed under these two main assumptions. One must, however, ask whether Bultmann has not explained the eschatological deed accomplished by God in relation to human - decision in over-tones with the result that the divine operation which is at work in man goes into the background.

Further, in my assessment of Bultmann's interpretation of faith I do not intend to argue for the idea that the act of faith as obedience and confession in man is a divinely dictated act or a purely supernatural one with no relation to one's own historical existence. Rather, I venture to suggest that

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1. Th. N.T. I, pp. 329-30.

2. cf. Th. N.T. I, p. 289.

3. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 220.

there is bound to be a correlation of the divine operation and man's historical decision of faith and these are commensurate with each other. We are bound to recognize the fact, as Prof. J. Macquarrie writes in his foreword to Peter Fransen's book entitled The New Life of Grace that "our very existences are a free gift from God so that there is a kind of grace in existence itself and even those who do not profess belief in God may know the stirrings of grace within themselves".<sup>1</sup> It will also be remembered that one of the tenets of Transcendental Thomism is that contingency recognizes the creativity of God and this is more so in the act of faith. Further, for Origen, as Wiles explains "our creation as rational beings, is a sheer act of God's grace .....; there is also the response of faith in which divine grace and human freedom are in some mysterious way combined".<sup>2</sup>

In this connection what Bultmann says of creation and existence will occupy our thinking in the following pages. He observes: "That man is in the world is due to an event, to the creation of God; it is not to be deduced from the eternal necessity .... of a cosmic continuum".<sup>3</sup> He further explains that "the true faith in creation, on the other hand, affirms that man is subject to a power that lies beyond him and that cannot be disposed of - not even in his thinking; that he is called into

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1. Peter Fransen, S.J. The New Life of Grace, tr. from the Flemish by Georges Dupont (London, 1969), Foreword.

2. M.F. Wiles, The Divine Apostle: The Interpretation of St Paul's Epistles in The Early Church (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 103, 105.

3. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 208.

being by this power, abandoned to it, and placed under its authority ....."<sup>1</sup> Greek science held the view that the source, the  $\delta\psi\chi\eta$  as the creator stands beyond the world and man but is immanent in the world as its law and is also immanent in the human spirit; "Deus in nobis". And accordingly, man is understood as part of the cosmos; he is not seen in his historicity. This is precisely what Bultmann rejects and explains that ..... "Life also is my particular life. It is not an instance of the process of life in general, but is entrusted to me to live ..... I live in my decisions in which I myself am at stake, either to win myself or lose it. I have my guilt and my remorse. And as my life is uncanny because I am a temporal being subject to death, so also is it uncanny because it is a historical life. There are no universal standards that relieve me of the concrete responsibility of deciding myself. Who knows whether he has decided rightly? Who knows what the right authority is? Who knows whether he has really been obedient and has not lived under illusions? In the deed of decision, man's being is at stake - i.e., in the moment whose content can never be deduced from the universal, but which is always a concrete, individual moment that demands action, decision. What man himself is -- i.e., has become in his temporal - historical existence .... He can win his self or lose it, but he has to act ..... To be sure, he can determine, to a certain extent, the possibilities of action; and he ought to do this as far as he can. But the choice among these possibi-

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 212.



lities is always a venture; and no God and Spirit can take away from him the venture and the responsibility for his choice".<sup>1</sup>

All this obviously reflects Bultmann's interpretation of faith understood from the viewpoint of the existentialist philosophy of human existence. Two important points can be deduced from the above statements. Firstly, for him the human will and historical decisions of the individual are the sole and sure means of winning or losing of his self and the exercise of such means is always a "venture". Secondly, his contention is that faith is not attributable to the Spirit or any source outside man's decision in his historical existence. Hence, he elsewhere argues that "the eschatological nature of faith is testified, lastly, by the fact that Paul does not describe faith as inspired, attributable to the "Spirit" .... when I Cor.12:3 gives the cry, "Lord Jesus" as criterion for possession by the Spirit, this does not intend to attribute the confession of faith to the Spirit, but to state the means by which spiritual and demonic ecstasy are to be distinguished".<sup>2</sup> "Just the opposite: The Spirit is the gift which faith receives (Gal.3:2, 5, 14) and in which the grace of God appropriated by faith becomes effective in concrete living. Therefore, Paul calls the "love" (ἀγαπή) in which faith is operating "the fruit of the Spirit", ..... A comparison between the parallel sentences Gal. 5:6, and 6:15: in Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any meaning, but (in the first case) "faith working through

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 214.

2. Th. N.T. I, p. 330, and footnote.



love" or (in the other case) "a new creation", reveals that the existing of a Christian in the faith that operates in love is eschatological occurrence .....".<sup>1</sup>

It is at this point that one can join issue with Bultmann who has little sympathy for the view that the divine operation is thought to enkindle an inward urge in man before faith, i.e. God working "from within outwards". To quote Augustine's famous statement: "you have made us (in creation and redemption) and turned us towards you, Lord, and our heart finds no peace until it rests in you". It is not clear why Bultmann vehemently argues for Augustine's theory of a "point of contact" in man as shown above and at the same time takes very little note of the second half of this quotation from Augustine's works. Further, in the direction indicated here by Augustine Jan Van Rysbroeck goes a step further as the following passage will show: "..... the grace of God, which flows out from God, is an inward compulsion or driving of the Holy Ghost, Who from within us drives our spirit and incites it in all virtues ..... and His inward driving or working in us, natural or supernatural, is more within us and closer to us than are our own works; and therefore God works in us from within outwards, ....."<sup>2</sup> I do not however, fully agree with Rysbroeck as his statement seems to be one-sided because it does seem to undermine the importance of human decisions. And

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 330.

2. Jan Van Rysbroeck, The Spiritual Espousals, tr. Eric Colledge (London, 1952), p. 92.

I for one, wish to emphasize both human decisions and divine operation in the individual's act of faith.

Besides, not only does Bultmann underemphasize the divine operation in man before faith but also accords no value to the Spirit's working within. He astonishes by the extent of his erudition when he interprets I Cor. 12:3 ..... and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit, along the lines of his thinking that faith is not attributable to the Spirit. The general ethos and expression of Paul's statement in that context (I Cor. 12:3) abundantly makes it clear that Paul was trying to impress upon the Christians in Corinth that in the midst of the influence of being led away to make an act of homage to rulers it is the Holy Spirit which enables any one to confess Jesus as Lord. E. Schweizer is unequivocal on this point: "In I Cor. 12:3, in distinction from all subsidiary characteristics, knowledge and confession of Jesus as the  $\kappa\upsilon\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$  is the gift which gives evidence of the  $\tau\tau\upsilon\epsilon\tau\mu\alpha$  as such".<sup>1</sup>

At this point it may well be necessary for us to make a brief survey of Bultmann's estimate of the Spirit. He argues that "Paul, as a matter of course, shares the general Christian view that the Spirit is conferred by baptism, (I Cor. 6:11, 12:13, II Cor. 1:22, ..... ) and also the conception of the Spirit as a miraculous, divine power, (Rom. 15:19, I Cor. 2:4 etc.....). In speaking of the Spirit, he uses animistic and

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1. Th. D. N.T. VI, 426.

dynamistic terminology promiscuously, a fact which in itself indicates that he is unconcerned with any speculative interest in the idea of Spirit ..... At least Paul can speak of the Spirit as a something that can take residence in a man (Rom. 8:9, 11: I Cor. 6:19), and therefore is bound to a locality. But such a locution is scarcely to be taken strictly, since it can also be used in reference to the congregation (I Cor. 3:16), in which case a conception strictly corresponding to the literal wording is inconceivable. Nevertheless, Paul's term "spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44, 46) strongly suggests that Paul conceived of the Spirit as a material, just as the term "glory" closely related to that of Spirit, undoubtedly denotes a (heavenly) substance in I Cor. 15:40 f. Moreover, though II Cor. 3:7 naively speaks of the externally visible brightness of "glory", still Paul's contrasting of the glory of the old and the new "covenant" (3:7 ff) indicates by itself that he does not stick to this conception; ..... When Paul says of those who along with the Spirit of the Lord have received freedom: "we are being transformed from glory into glory ..... " (V.18), it is clear that this present glory is no shining material. It is nothing other than the power by means of which the "inward self" is renewed day by day (4:16); recall that "glory" and "power" can be synonymous .....<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Bultmann's attempt to explain the various trains of thought which lie behind Paul's use of the term Spirit has received widespread attention. I have, however, a special reason to believe that Bultmann's categorical statements that Paul simply shares the

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1. Th. N.T. I, pp. 333-34.

general Christian view of the Spirit as a miraculous power, and that Paul uses animistic and dynamistic terminology promiscuously in order to explain the role of the Spirit are not entirely convincing. For, judging from the indications in the texts, for Paul the gift of new life is a supreme token of God's operation. The Risen Lord who appeared to him was essentially Spirit, for the living person with whom he had come in touch belonged to the sphere of the Spirit. About this transforming power H.A.A. Kennedy rightly observes that "when Paul thinks especially of this power he speaks of the Spirit. When he dwells on the source of his energy he speaks of Christ".<sup>1</sup> It would be logically possible to hold that for Paul the operation of the Spirit was no miraculous power in the ordinary sense of the term but rather it was God's power at work: "For I will not venture to speak of any thing except what Christ has wrought through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit", Rom. 15:18-19. Paul's gospel came to the Thessalonians not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit ..... they received the word in much application, with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, I Thes. 1:5-6. To identify any kind of miraculous power with Paul's idea of the Holy Spirit as the divine power is to blur the distinction between the gnostic understanding of the spirit as a magical, spasmodic and eccentric and Paul's own understanding of the Spirit as God's power in the proclamation of his Gospel. In Paul's sense the Spirit as a miraculous power

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1. H.A.A. Kennedy, Theology of the Epistles (London, 1919), p. 89.

mediates supernatural knowledge, I Cor. 2:7.

Furthermore, from the axiom - 'that being a Christian is a constant self-relating to God's act of salvation', Bultmann concludes that there is a variety of grades and individual possibilities of faith. And for him closely related with the aspect of "standing in Christ" or "in faith" is the aspect of faith which issues in the gifts of the Spirit. He affirms: "Knowledge as a special aspect of "faith" is a gift of the Spirit ..... Though here (Phil. 1:9 f. and Rom. 12:2 clearly show) and probably in the majority of cases the knowledge meant is knowledge of the will of God - i.e. .... However great the danger is that gnosis may separate out of "faith" as speculation - a danger which has undoubtedly become a reality in the Gnostics of Corinth - in Paul it retains its basic character of an existential knowledge in which faith unfolds itself. For Paul defines its purpose to be: "that we may understand God's gift means to understand one's self as the receiver of it; hence, this highest "wisdom" and "knowledge" must simultaneously be the clearest understanding of one's self ..... I Cor. 8, above all, indicates that Christian gnosis is the understanding of one's self under divine "grace". For "knowledge" is not genuine if it leads to getting "puffed up" and hence damages the "love" ( $\alpha\gamma\alpha\pi\eta$ ) in which "faith" ought to be working. So here, too, it becomes clear that "knowledge" in all its forms and degrees besides being an understanding of its object is simultaneously an existential understanding of one's self in "faith".<sup>1</sup>

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 327.

All these conclusions which Bultmann draws and develops with the utmost vigour of consistent thought basing on Pauline passages to prove the existential understanding of man under faith are apparently cogent and convincing. However, from these passages two things are to be underlined. Firstly, as an exegete he tries to demonstrate that almost every text in Paul strikes a note of existential understanding of man. Secondly, only too obvious is the fact that his exposition of I Cor. 2:12 stems from the existential interpretation of faith which differs from our interpretation of the same passage, especially, I Cor. 2:6-12 as being the classic example of Paul's understanding of the Spirit as a revelatory agent as shown above, cf. I Cor. 2:10. Besides, one can see a danger into which Bultmann is falling, a danger of using a single key to fit all the wards. He tends to explain almost all, if not quite all, aspects of Christian life as understood by Paul from the viewpoint of one single scheme of thinking. He further understands the status of man under faith, the gift of wisdom or knowledge and other God's gifts granted to him as though the profundity of Paul's theology were revolving round one single scheme of thinking - an existential understanding of man.

Moreover, he elsewhere explains that "man stands in a historical world in which he is bound together with concrete human beings. It is in relation to them that he is responsible, not to some universal law or idea. In this responsibility he wins his true dignity because in it he ventures himself



and, through surrender, wins himself".<sup>1</sup> What Bultmann is actually arguing for is the acknowledgment that "man is a being who lives in time, in history, and in responsible relation with others and therefore is insecure and not at his own disposal - without this acknowledgment, there also is no faith in God the Creator". He adds: "The uncanniness by which human life is always threatened" /is/ "sin" /by which he understands / "Superbia" - namely, that man wills to be himself by himself and for himself ..... God's goodness is precisely that man should be himself and receive his selfhood from God his Creator as a creature. If he refuses to do this, then precisely his selfhood, which he has received from God as a possibility, becomes evil for him".<sup>2</sup> Faith in God as the Creator of which Bultmann speaks "is not a conviction about  $\alpha\chi\eta$  that is constantly present in the world-process, the rule of which I can rationally investigate and with reference to which I can understand all individual phenomena. Rather it is an "existentiell" knowledge, i.e. a knowledge of myself as a right-wised sinner that has an effect on my existence and that must constantly be laid hold of anew ..... Faith in the Creator can never be possessed once for all as a reassuring insight, but must constantly be won and realized anew. For if, in receiving forgiving grace, I receive my selfhood as a being from God, then I must at the same time understand and realize it as a being for God, i.e

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1. Existence and Faith, p. 214.

2. Ibid., pp. 216-19.



as a life in love that I have to fulfill in my personal relations with others".<sup>1</sup>

All these statements obviously indicate that some measure of interchange of the influence of the existential thinking which insists on man's understanding of his own existence and his possibilities, i.e. man is on each occasion called to decision and stands at risk and the use of the Pauline concept of faith as the committal of self to God's forgiving grace is discernible in Bultmann's system. He is right in saying that in receiving forgiving grace I receive my selfhood as a being from God even as we admit the fact that selfhood is the precondition of all good and its need is to understand and feel its creatureliness before God, its dependence and its own subordinate place in the entire scheme of things. But can the self do this by its own effort? is the basic question which an exegete of Paul's texts or a systematic theologian should seek to answer. Bultmann's answer to this question is yes and no. Yes, when man by his own will decides for God - i.e. in his decision for God one can receive his selfhood as a being from God; and no, when the individual decides to belong to himself or decides for the world. So the matter of winning or losing his self rests entirely with man's decisions in his historical existence. For him, man's essence resides in his power to will, not in his power to think. He insists: "Man's essential Being is not Logos, reason or spirit. If we ask primitive Christianity

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1. Existence and Faith, p. 221.

where the essential Being of man resides, there can only be one answer: in the will".<sup>1</sup> Can man in his fallenness, unaided as he is, decide for God? Paul's answer to this question lies in his making it clear that the Spirit as the historical power experienced by the community works in the individual's act of faith as the δυναμις of God. This Bultmann rejects because the idea of the Spirit as supernatural power is quite incompatible with his idea of "encounter". For him, the Spirit becomes simply another name for the new life that God creates in the moment of "encounter". We have alluded already to Bultmann's own showing: "The Spirit is the gift which faith receives". In contrast to Bultmann's contention, William Temple suggestively pointed out that "so long as the self retains its initiative it can only fix itself as centre. Its hope of deliverance is to be uprooted from that centre and drawn to find its centre in God, in the Spirit of the Whole".<sup>2</sup> Thomas Aquinas believed in the absolute power of God. For him "free-will can only be turned to God, when God turns it, .....".<sup>3</sup>

Further, it is to be observed that it is from the standpoint of Paul's understanding of the Spirit as the historical power of God at work (cf. I Cor. 15:45 τὸ ἐν δυνάμει καὶ ἐν δόξῃ) that his idea of the divine operation as an a priori concept in the total plan of God's redemptive activity becomes more

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Primitive Christianity In Its Contemporary Setting, p. 180.

2. William Temple, Nature, Man and God (London, 1934), p. 376.

3. Thomas Aquinas, The Summa Theologica, (First Part) tr. Fathers of English Dominican Province, Third Number (London, 1915), p. 335.

meaningful and can be construed as one of the major themes of his theology which Bultmann cannot afford to set aside. As the following paraphrasing displays, Prof. Dodd has perhaps a far more balanced viewpoint on Paul's perspective of the total plan of God's redemptive activity: "It is God who as Creator determined the nature of man, and as Redeemer wills his goal, ..... Everything ~~we~~ may rightly affirm about man is governed by the fact that his whole existence stands within God's design".<sup>1</sup> And also, nothing is more certain in the mind of Paul than to believe that it was God's absolute sovereignty which made him the apostle for the Gentiles and thus he declares: "according to the command of the eternal God to bring about the obedience of faith", Rom. 16:26. It was thus axiomatic for him to say that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, II Cor. 5:19.

It is perhaps from this understanding that Paul's most profound reflection on the God-man relationship is apparently derived. In Stacey's opinion a new view of man for St Paul could only arise from a new view of God. For him, "Paul discovered a new view of God. He discovered that God was in Christ and thereafter the experience of God in Christ became the determinative factor in Paul's view of man".<sup>2</sup> Also, arguing from the 'indissoluble connection of power and gift with the conception of divine righteousness' we ought to ask

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1. C.H. Dodd, Man in God's Design - A Publication of Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas (Valence: 1952), p. 9.

2. As cited in "Notes of Recent Exposition", The Expos. Times Vol. The Sixty-Eighth (1956-57), p. 1.

whether Bultmann has not overemphasized the aspect of gift at the expense of the character of the Giver of which Paul was said to have a profound understanding - especially His dealing with His chosen race.

To be more precise, the idea of God's dealings with the nation of Israel must have been in the foreground of Paul's movement of thought adduced in I Cor. 10:1 ff. wherein he explains that the Israelites shared in the revelations of God; the Wilderness period is determinative period in their religion. By the phrase "our fathers" he probably means that the Christians are spiritual descendents of the Hebrews. And also, when Paul traces back to the righteousness of faith reckoned to Abraham (see especially Rom. 4:17 ff.), on Käsemann's account of it, "he depicts Abraham's faith as a relation to that God who reveals himself in history".<sup>1</sup>

Bultmann argues persuasively that in Paul's understanding of human existence the category of freedom of the will is a dominant concept, and hence, he appeals in several instances to the text: "Be ye reconciled to God", II Cor. 5:20. But Paul's understanding of God as being active to reconcile the world in Christ unto himself is equally forcibly portrayed in the same passage to which Bultmann attaches such importance from the viewpoint of his existentialist theological drive and perspective.

This now brings us to the discussion of Bultmann's concept of

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1. E. Käsemann, Perspectives on Paul, tr. M. Kohl (London, 1971), pp. 68-69.

history, from the standpoint of which he interprets faith, and it is therefore the most important aspect of his anthropology. In the following pages one important question presses itself upon us, namely does Bultmann's demythologized Kerygma interpreted from his understanding of history have any compelling claim to be regarded as the correct projection of Paul's theology? It is of interest to note that both Prof. Bultmann and Prof. R.G. Collingwood, the English historian and philosopher quite independently and working in different fields reached not dissimilar viewpoints. Collingwood observed: "history is for human self-knowledge. It is generally thought to be of importance to man that he should know himself: ..... knowing yourself means knowing what you can do: ....., the only clue to what man can do is what man has done. The value of history, then, is that it teaches what man has done and thus what man is".<sup>1</sup> And also for him "the history of thought, and therefore all history, is the re-enactment of past thought in the historian's own mind".<sup>2</sup> Bultmann, on the other hand, defines hermeneutics as "the science of understanding history in general".<sup>3</sup> This idea is further amplified by Gogarten when he affirms: The crucial problem of history ....., is the problem of hermeneutics that is to say the problem of an interpretation which approaches history not from outside but from within the historical character of human existence, or, more precisely,

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1. R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (Oxford, 1962), p. 10.

2. Ibid., p. 215.

3. Rudolf Bultmann, Essays, 235.

from (what Heidegger calls) 'my' (je mein) historical character".<sup>1</sup> Bultmann contends that "the subject of history is man".<sup>2</sup> He does not explicitly make a reference to the influence on him of Heidegger's view of history. For Heidegger, history is nothing but man's way of being as historical ... .... The primary historical is man himself.<sup>3</sup> Heidegger contends that the science of history (Historie) is concerned with the study of the possible.<sup>4</sup> Following the same line of argument, Bultmann observes: "The "right" philosophy is simply one which has worked out an appropriate terminology for the understanding of existence, an understanding involved in human existence itself".<sup>5</sup> This is one aspect of his concept of history. And there is another aspect to it, namely "by historical is not meant the "brute facts" of positivistic historiography, but an understood fact", in the sense of Dilthey and Collingwood, a fact, which has not only an "outside" but "inside". In fact, Dilthey's dictum is: Historical knowledge is a mode of self-knowledge.

From this statement we can draw one preliminary conclusion that Bultmann's philosophy of history stems not only from his understanding of the existentialists' philosophy of existence but from Dilthey's idea of history. And in the

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1. F. Gogarten, Demythologizing and History, tr. N.H. Smith (London 1955), p. 58.

2. D. Rudolf Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 143.

3. cf. M. Heidegger, Sein und Zeit (Tübingen, 1949), p. 381 and J. Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, (London, 1955) p. 161.

4. cf. Ibid., p. 394, and J. Macquarrie, op. cit., 162.

5. Kerygma and Myth I, p. 193.



main, his philosophy of history can be taken as reflecting the principal propositions of Collingwood's theory of history. He insists: "the meaning in history lies always in the present, ..... Always in your present lies meaning in history, and you cannot see it as a spectator, but only in your responsible decisions. In every moment slumbers the possibility of being the eschatological moment. You must awaken it".<sup>1</sup> We have already observed that Bultmann vehemently argues for R.G. Collingwood's view of history as "the self-knowledge of the living mind". He, on the other hand, contends that the self of man in its radical historicity is ultimately responsible to God. He observes: "The question of meaning of history has become meaningless".<sup>2</sup> What is characteristic of history is that "an ultimate distinction between the knower and his object cannot be maintained".<sup>3</sup> He explains with justification that to the reality of an historical event belongs its future, indeed, "each present hour is questioned and challenged by its future".<sup>4</sup> "Historicity now gains the meaning of responsibility over against the future, which is at the same time the responsibility over against the heritage of the past in face of the future".<sup>5</sup> As is well known, Bultmann virtually rejected all Greek idea

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1. History and Eschatology, p. 155.

2. Ibid., p. 120.

3. Ibid., pp. 119-20.

4. Ibid., p. 140.

5. Ibid., p. 143.



of history, which, in his opinion, had totally ignored man's individuality. In short, "man is not understood in his historicity".<sup>1</sup> And his analysis of the religious thought and history of the O.T. assumes a new significance in that for him each situation for the covenant people embodies "a call to responsibility in the face of the future", and "God confronts man with his blessing and demand, judging him in each successive moment. Every such moment however points towards the future. God is always a God who comes".<sup>2</sup> The essence of Biblical thought for him can be regarded as that which effectively historicized cosmology. It made the human will the central reality in history. Because its God is always a coming God, man is recognized as a being always open to the future -- "a man is always what his past has made him. He always brings his past along with him into his present. Since evil is sin, it throws man's relation with God entirely out of gear, just as the relations between man and man are thrown out of gear by the wrongs they do to one another. Just as when one man wronged another the only way out is for him to own up to it and receive forgiveness, so it is with man's relation to God. Only confession and forgiveness can make him a new man and give him a fresh start".<sup>3</sup>

Bultmann, however, thinks the Jewish thinkers of late Judaism had cut the Gordian knot completely by assigning Redemption to a future wherein God would intervene into history. Thereby

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1. History and Eschatology, p. 18.

2. Ibid., p. 18 and Primitive Christianity In Its Contemporary Setting, p. 34.

3. Primitive Christianity In Its Contemporary Setting, p. 182.

Israel lost its historical moorings and history was cosmologized. And yet, the distinctive contribution of the prophetic religion of the O.T. is admirably summarized by him when he writes: "The responsibility of the individual coincides with the responsibility of the whole people".<sup>1</sup> His arguments enlisted in the defence of his idea of history were also reflected in his analysis of the thought-forms of the earliest Christian Church. He points out that it (the earliest Christian Church) adopted an eschatology which was more cosmological than anthropological. Its cosmic elements were drawn from Jewish apocalyptic. It believed implicitly in an imminent end of the world. It viewed itself not as an historical community but as community belonging only to the new age - thus eschatology was cosmologized - "in early Christianity history is swallowed up in eschatology".<sup>2</sup>

His contention is that the genuine historicity of man was sacrificed at the altar of a cosmological mythology of the early Church. Yet, he argues that a solution of the problem was achieved by the anthropological theologies of Paul and John - "At all events the Pauline conception of historicity and his unfolding of the dialectic of Christian existence contains the solution of the problem of history and eschatology as it was raised by the delay of the parousia of Christ".<sup>3</sup> Further, he points out that Paul retained the expectation of

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1. History and Eschatology, p. 31.

2. Ibid., p. 37.

3. Ibid., p. 47

future cosmic events. For Paul, "the end of history cannot be the natural result of historical development, but only its breaking off, accomplished by God. But Sub Specie Dei the end is nevertheless the goal of history because, according to Paul, it is grace of God by which the end is brought about, ..... ".<sup>1</sup> This statement is further clarified when he writes: Righteousness becomes "the essence of salvation". It has its origin in God's grace which is his "eschatological deed". Thus "every "cosmic" dimension - i.e. in reality, historic dimension /has/ a locus in the actual living of men, which is true "history"". <sup>2</sup>

All this clearly reflects Bultmann's recurring argument that God's eschatological deed in Christ becomes a present reality, i.e. the power of God's righteousness in the proclamation because the kerygma makes it so. To the same effect he writes elsewhere: "The kerygma is itself an eschatological happening. In it qua address the event of Jesus Christ - on each occasion encounters my existence".<sup>3</sup>

As is well known, Bultmann has little sympathy for the objective factualness of the Christ-event. The historical past cannot have historic meaning for the present. The historian's task, as Bultmann explains it, is to reproduce past events in memory; but such a reproduction of past events "in their purely wordly actuality" /has no existential significance/

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1. History and Eschatology, p. 40.

2. Th. N.T., I. pp. 271 f. 289, 305.

3. Tr. from Kerygma und Mythos, VI/I. (Hamburg, 1963), p. 27.

"and memory in that sense can imperil and even destroy "historic" existence, ..... With the recollection of the kerygma it is otherwise. This does not present us with facts of the past in their bare actuality, ....., but, as a sacramental event, it represents the events of the past in such a way that it renews them, and thus becomes a personal encounter for me".<sup>1</sup> This is amplified when he writes: "It seems high time that Christology was emancipated from its subordination to an ontology of objective thought and re-stated in a new ontological terminology".<sup>2</sup>

Further, he affirms: "But although the history of the nation and the world had lost interest for Paul, he brings to light another phenomenon, the historicity of man, the true historical life of the human being, the history which every one experiences for himself and by which he gains his real essence".<sup>3</sup> What he untiringly stresses is that "Paul no longer looks into the history of peoples and the world nor into a new history". "What is the core of history? What is its real subject? The answer is: man".<sup>4</sup> What Bultmann argues is that Paul's view of history is orientated towards the individual. This seems fascinating, illuminating, and probably quite convincing, especially when he points to the fact that meaning in history issues in the present moment of decision, through which the individual achieves his authentic existence. And also, the

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1. Kerygma and Myth I, p. 115.

2. Ibid., p. 209 fn. I

3. History and Eschatology, p. 43.

4. Ibid., pp. 43 and 139.

upshot of all this well-balanced exposition of the Biblical outlook of God's saving history is an admirably clear and concise example of his argumentation of his strong existential philosophical thrust. Besides, Bultmann's exegetical rigour in setting forth the significance and intelligibility of God's righteousness of grace, viz. the power of the proclamation of the kerygma is certainly striking in so far as he incessantly stresses the idea that "the 'core of history' is therefore man ..... History is the sphere where man may attain 'genuineness of life' or fail to attain it .... It is here that the Christian Faith is of crucial importance because by it genuineness of life with its freedom from self, is offered to man by God as a gift. It can be received only as a gift".<sup>1</sup>

It is worth noticing that in his demythologizing programme of the kerygma Bultmann accords the utmost importance to two aspects, namely that God's eschatological deed in Christ does not admit demythologization and that the genuineness of life is offered to man as God's gift. With these two structural presuppositions he never ceases to emphasize the historicity of man. It thus goes to Bultmann's credit as over against the liberals that by his demythologization of the message of the N.T. to modern man the timeless character of Christian truth is upheld. But nevertheless, we ought to ask whether in his overemphasis on the individual's historical existence Bultmann does not oversimplify the significance of the history of the nation of Israel for Paul's explication of God's

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1. "Notes of Recent Exposition", The Expos. Times, Vol. The Sixty-Eighth (1956-57), p. 353.

righteousness. That is, whether his assertion: "To Paul the history of the world had lost interest" was not loaded with startling implications. It has been asked already "whether the ascription of this very individualistic view of history to Paul [Paul's view of history is 'the expression of his view of man'] does justice to the theme of Rom. 9-11, where Paul wrestles with the significance of events in the history of the people of Israel as a whole".<sup>1</sup> Why does Paul stress that the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable (Rom. 11: 28)? Does not Paul's thought centre around the conflict between the Synagogue and the Church? Why does Paul talk of the judgment upon the Jew first and then upon the Gentile Rom. 2:9 and the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, Rom. 1:17? Paul declares: "To the Jew I became like a Jew, to win Jews; ..... To win Gentiles who are outside the Law, I made myself like one of them .....", I Cor. 9:20-21. Why is all this constraint in the mind of Paul to win for Christ Jews first and Gentiles as well? Is it not because, in Paul's view, Israel is particularly the bearer of the promise, Rom. 9:1-5? Paul was certainly conscious of God's dealings with his people whether you call it God's saving history or religious history. It is precisely in this sense that Dahl's estimate of Bultmann's understanding of Paul's view of history is still valid. In Dahl's opinion,

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1. "Notes of Recent Exposition", The Expos. Times, Volume The Sixty-Eighth (1956-57), p. 353.



Bultmann's understanding of Rom. 9-11, "is just one example of his 'unhistorical' treatment of Paul: 'One may ask whether this "dehistoricising" of the New Testament is not really more characteristic of Bultmann's theology than his famous programme of demythologizing'.<sup>1</sup>

Besides, Bultmann untiringly stresses the power of God's righteousness in terms of God's gift, i.e. the 'genuineness of life' is offered to man by God as a gift. However, it is more than likely that Paul's shout of triumph in the passage of Rom. 8:38 ff. reflects his theology of the power of God's righteousness in terms of cosmic dimensions (with the implication that Christian hope is dependent on God's love which is to be understood from the standpoint of God's power). If this interpretation of the text is nearer the truth from the standpoint of Paul's view of God's futurity it would then give weight to the case we are making that Paul would not have made such an absolute distinction between the history of the world and the historicity of man. This view may probably be supported by the fact that whenever Paul speaks of Christ's redemption, reconciliation and justification by his blood, I Cor. 1:30; Rom. 5:1-11, he must be thinking in terms of the new creation of both man and the world. R. Tannehill makes an interesting comment: "If Paul sees man as conditioned by the world of which he is a part, ....., man's salvation is tied up with what God does with this world. Thus

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1. As quoted in R.H. Fuller, The New Testament in Current Study (London, 1963), p. 72.



history cannot be reduced to the historicity of the individual, and the cosmic aspects of Paul's eschatology cannot be dismissed as cosmological speculation".<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, if with the Synoptists, we mean by the kingdom of God a spiritual reality inaugurated by the coming of Jesus, i.e. the new Age began, and with Paul by the cross of Christ, the new creation began, for the cross is the power of God for salvation, I Cor. 1:18, then it is easy to see why Paul could declare that the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power, I Cor. 4:20 which in turn means righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, Rom. 14:17. Paul's language of the cross of Christ as final and decisive act in history which exhausted the power of the principalities and powers certainly indicates the fact that with the Christ-event the new creation in the cosmic mode of existence started - the possible regeneration of the universe is anticipated, Rom. 8:21 f. and cf. Col. 1:12. Paul's thought is so much couched in the language of the redemption of the world. The Pauline soteriology embraces not only anthropology but the whole cosmos. The main thrust of Paul's argument in the passage Rom. 8:21-23 is that the first fruits of the Spirit is the sure sign of God's power at work in history to redeem the cosmic mode of existence. Whereas Bultmann's scheme of thinking individualizes too much, i.e. it is too much con-

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1. Robert C. Tannehill, Dying and Rising with Christ: A study in Pauline Theology (Berlin, 1967), p. 74.

cerned with the inwardness of the human existence. His framework of thought is lamentably lagging behind this Paul's main emphasis on the basis and regeneration of the world.

It is instructive in this connection to note what Prof. Käsemann suggests "To understand the righteousness of God exclusively in terms of gift is to ask for trouble: the inevitable result is that the Pauline anthropology is sucked under by the pull of an individualistic outlook ..... what distinguished the Pauline theology from both Christian enthusiasts and Jewish apocalyptists<sup>7</sup> is rather the unprecedented radicalization and universalization of the promise in the doctrine of the justification of the ungodly".<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he quotes with approval E. Schweizer's statement: "consequently it is not permissible to interpret man as an individual, resting within himself and fundamentally separable from the rest of the world".<sup>2</sup> Following the same line of argument, what he himself writes is cogent and convincing: "The terms used in Pauline anthropology all undoubtedly refer to the whole man in the varying bearings and capacities of his existence; ..... Here existence is always fundamentally conceived from the angle of the world to which one belongs ..... Anthropology is cosmology in concreto, even in the sphere of faith".<sup>3</sup>

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1. E. Käsemann, New Testament. Questions Of Today, tr. W.J. Montague (London, 1969), pp. 176 and 178.

2. Perspectives on Paul, p. 17.

3. Ibid., pp. 26-27.

In the final analysis, however much Bultmann with acumen and precision makes a rather strong case by reason of his concept of history that Paul's view of history is but his view of man, yet his thought appears to be defective in two respects. Firstly, at his hands the cosmic dimension has been significantly limited to the anthropological category. Secondly, his idea of the "believer's standing in Christ" stops short of the explanation of his personality which is to find its true fulfilment in the context of community. That is, in his widely-ranging discussion of the theme of the Christian's attitude toward men in terms of Paul's characteristic phrases, "a slave to all", "be servants of one another", "bearing" of "one another's burdens", "each counting the other better than himself" and so on,<sup>1</sup> Bultmann leaves out one element of great importance. In Paul's theology the "individual's standing in Christ" cannot be completed apart from his place in the community. Prof. E. Schweizer considers this essential point as the life-principle of the community when he affirms: "The Spirit not only liberates man from himself and opens him to others, but it also restores his individuality, not in such a way that he can contemplate it, but in order that he may stand before God and others and live for others therein"..... "The value of the spiritual gifts is not that those who enjoy them are shown to be pneumatic thereby, but they edify the community".<sup>2</sup> This interpretation of the "belie-

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1. Th. N.T. I, pp. 340-45.

2. Th. D. N.T. VI, 432.

ver's standing in Christ" is in keeping with the teaching of the New Testament according to which the true regulative concept in the individual believer's life is that of the community.

## CHAPTER II

### An inquiry into Existential elements in recent Indian thought.

In the second half of the preceding chapter we have closely examined Bultmann's anthropology with reference to his understanding of faith and history. Our primary concern in this chapter is to make a careful examination of the works of recent Hindu theologians in order to investigate whether there are any existential elements in their religious thought. The conceptual framework of Idealism, be it Western or Eastern, has never gone unchallenged. Until the proponents of Existentialism, especially Kierkegaard, M. Heidegger, Jaspers, questioned the tenability of some of the main propositions of Idealism, the sharp distinction made by it between the realms of appearance and reality dominated philosophical thought. Idealism could not establish a satisfactory relationship between the temporal and the eternal. This is perhaps the major shortcoming of the idealistic schemes of Plato, Sankara and Mahayana Buddhism. In contrast, Heidegger insists that existence is always individual and cannot be reduced to any form of classification - a close parallel with Kierkegaard. (Incidentally, it may be pointed out that we cannot trace the source from which Heidegger learned this principle). Jaspers affirms: "We are completely irreplaceable. We are not merely classes of universal Being".<sup>1</sup> This is perhaps an important point of contact between Christian and

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1. K. Jaspers, Vernunft und Existenz (Groningen, 1935), p. 19, quoted by P. Tillich in Theology of Culture (Oxford: New York 1959), p. 103.

Existentialist thought.

But from the middle of the nineteenth century, if not earlier, there emerged a new movement of thought advocated by the existentialist theologians who questioned "Philosophical idealism in which existence is said to be slipping backward into the timeless anamnesis".<sup>1</sup> Kierkegaard writes: "Thus I always reason from existence, not toward existence, whether I move in the sphere of palpable sensible fact or in the realm of thought".<sup>2</sup> So it is axiomatic with Kierkegaard that "the objective thought has no relation to the existing subject: and while we are always confronted with the difficult question of how the existing subject slips into this objectivity, where subjectivity is merely pure abstract subjectivity"which again is an objective determination, not signifying any existing human being), it is certain that the existing subjectivity tends more and more to evaporate."<sup>3</sup> And so they were not satisfied with the traditional understanding of the Christian faith, and gave a new interpretation to it - faith is understood to be a leap in the dark; and also the analysis of ontology was conducted on phenomenological principles.

This school of thought acquired added importance with the

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1. D. Templeton, Critique of Some Aspects of Kerygma as understood by Rudolf Bultmann and Charles Harold Dodd, unpublished Ph. D. Thesis submitted to the University of Glasgow, 1967, p. 38.
  2. S. Kierkegaard, Philosophical Fragments tr. D.F. Swenson (Princeton, 1936), p. 31.
  3. S. Kierkegaard: Concluding Unscientific Postscript, as quoted in The Search for Being: Essays from Kierkegaard to Sartre on the Problem of Existence, Trans. and eds. J.T. Wilde and W. Kimmel (New York, 1962), p. 65.

emergence of the existential theology of Bultmann who as an exegete made the same point with greater precision when he brought more clearly into view the crisis - theology of John and the anthropology of Paul. Much more to our present purpose is the fact that in Bultmann's account of New Testament theology the historical events, more precisely, the Christ-event are explained from the standpoint of anthropological and historiological presuppositions. That is to say for him supernatural phenomena are to be given natural explanations. This means that in changing the nature of authority from history to experience, i.e. from Heilsgechichte with the eschatological emphasis that "Christ professedly comes "late in time" and inaugurates the stage that will not pass away",<sup>1</sup> to the individual's historical experience, Bultmann is taking up a position (governed by the principle of demythologizing and phenomenology), which shows some similarities to the position of modern Hindu writers. What these similarities are will be investigated in the following chapter. But now in this chapter we proceed to investigate the works of recent Hindu writers, namely Rabindranath Tagore, Radhakrishnan, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, and the Ramakrishna Movement and Vivekananda - all with a view to bringing out existential elements contained in their writings. It will be noted that these Hindu theologians, 'religious-philosophical thinkers of modern Hinduism' in the language

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1. A.M. Mundada, "Hindu and Christian Views of History" in History and Contemporary India, ed. John C.B. Webster (London, 1971), p. 86.



of Dr. S.J. Samartha, sought to distinguish what is central in Hinduism from what is just accretion. They also realized that their understanding of Hinduism involves a re-statement of the fundamentals of Hindu religion in terms of its doctrine of man, of its view of worldlife and history. Hence it is of interest to note that in their re-statement of the main propositions of classical Hinduism some are understood to be of secondary importance while others are understood to be timeless truths to which due weight must be given and which must be alive today. For instance, the belief in karma has had a powerful hold in the past on the minds of the ordinary people and of the considerable number of the orthodox among the educated classes; but from the time of renascent Hinduism the doctrine of karma has not seemed to have the same sway as before. Tagore affirmed that "man must regenerate himself and pass through a series of fresh beginnings and continual changes to the old .....".<sup>1</sup> So too, for Radhakrishnan, man is no longer caught or held in the iron grip of karma; man is free and "he is not at the mercy of inexorable fate. If he wills, he can improve on his past record. There is no inevitability of history".<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the traditional understanding of karma seemed to have stood in the way of meaningful evaluation of history. Hinduism has been called an "a historical" religion. But

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1. Tagore, The Religion of Man (London, 1931), pp. 55-56.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, Recovery of Faith (New York, 1955), p. 4.

modern Hindu thinkers are found to stray away from the traditional view of history and realize the felt need of today to orientate the view of history to a new dimension. B.G.

Gokhale argues that modern Indian historians are making their own contribution to a new view of history. In particular, he mentions three as important, namely K.M. Panikkar, Sir Judunath Sarkar and K.M. Munshi. K.M. Panikkar emphasizes "the faith that moves them to great deeds". Sir Judunath Sarkar looks for the reason "why things happened ..... as they did actually happen". Munshi wants history "to investigate and uphold values". Thus these thinkers, he says, "in some sense pass into the realm of the philosophy of history".<sup>1</sup> The implication is that this tendency to develop a philosophy of history takes into account two basic assumptions, namely 1) the cyclic movement of time as in classical Hinduism is no longer wholly acceptable; and 2) the time has come to become responsive to new tides of life and thought. Dr. S.J. Samartha aptly phrases this new understanding of history as follows: "These thinkers (Tagore, Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan) desire to remove somehow the futility of cyclical movement and make room for the emergence of the new in history".<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the concept of untouchability is no longer considered to be a religious and social ethic. Modern Hinduism has become ashamed of it. This social awakening was the

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1. cf. B.G. Gokhale, Indian Thought Through The Ages: A study of some dominant concepts (London: Bombay, 1961), p. 3, cited in History and Contemporary India, p. 75.

2. cf. S.J. Samartha, The Hindu View of History, Classical and Modern (Bangalore, 1959), pp. 24-26, cited in History and Contemporary India, p. 77.

result of the vigorous social - programme of Gandhi who succeeded in throwing open temples to the outcaste. It was Gandhi's lasting contribution to the Indian nation that he helped India to adopt the policy of education and uplifting the submerged classes in society.

As for the renascent Hindu thinkers' insistence on timeless truths, the fundamental truth of the self as well as of the universe which was contained in the saying: "Tat Tvam asi, That art Thou", i.e. the knowledge of identity of the self and Brahman is still held with utmost vigour. Also important is the belief that the knowledge of identity of the self and Brahman is the outcome of a self-discipline which is frequently referred to as part of the make up of the self in the writings of the theologians of renascent Hinduism. With these introductory observations we shall now begin to make a careful examination of the system of ideas of each of recent Hindu theologians.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)

Tagore was a poet of world-wide reputation. His religious thought came out most clearly in three of his books namely, Sadhana,<sup>1</sup> Personality,<sup>2</sup> and The Religion of Man.<sup>3</sup> In language common to renascent Hinduism Tagore affirmed the idea of soul force and felt compelled to urge people to tap the potential in the human soul. Even though he had no particular

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1. Sadhana: The Realization of life (London, 1913); 2. Personality, (London, 1921); and 3. The Religion of Man, being the Hibbert Lectures for 1930 (Published in 1931, London).

philosophical affiliation yet his concept of religion gave a characteristic colouring to the framework of his thought and it is in this sense that his works merit careful consideration.

Tagore was an active member of the Brahma Samaj founded by Raja Ram Mohun Roy in 1928.<sup>1</sup> He described his religion as a "poet's religion" and in contrast to the Advaitists' concept of one's salvation as losing his self in the Absolute he stressed the idea that the personality of the individual in his union with God is not lost but completed and fulfilled. He affirmed: "The hall of union is there, where dwells the Lover in the heart of existence. When a man reaches it he at once realizes that he has come to Truth ....., and he is glad with a gladness which is an end and yet which has no end".<sup>2</sup> The influence of the religious movement called the Baúls is also noticeable in Tagore's writings and therefore certainly merits our attention and consideration.<sup>3</sup> Tagore writes: It [the sect of the Bauls] gives us a clue to the inner meaning of all religions. For it suggests that these religions are never about a God of cosmic force, but rather

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1. This is the earliest reform Movement in Hinduism. It opposed all idolatry, caste, priest caste, discrimination against women in society, and above all secured the abolition of sati (wife-burning). It also promoted education in the sciences. As a religious movement it favoured rational theism as against Vedanta non-duality. Though no longer powerful, its social ideals have gone into the making of the nation a secular state.

2. Tagore, The Religion of Man, p. 106 f.

3. See add. note on the Baúls.

about the God of human personality".<sup>1</sup> The number of instances where he refers to the Bauls' poets and their songs perhaps explains the deep and enduring inspiration which he drew from this cult.<sup>2</sup>

It has also been remarked that Tagore was a Vaishnavite in his own way. (Incidentally, it is to be noted that the religion of Vaishnavism has obviously modified the philosophy of the Upaniṣads a great deal by emphasizing the aspect of devotion and obedience to a personal God). He says: "But such an ideal of the utter extinction of the individual separateness [as is the case with the Vedanta religion] has not a universal sanction in India. There are many of us whose prayer is for dualism, so that for them the bond of devotion with God may continue for ever".<sup>3</sup> Further, a central element in Tagore's conception of God is love. The Upanishadic statement is: "From joy does spring all this creation", Tagore interprets it as: "It is his love that creates, .....".<sup>4</sup>

That his understanding of religion also stemmed from his theistic background can be discerned from the following passages: "But as our religion can only have its significance in this phenomenal world comprehended by our human self, this absolute conception of Brahman is outside the subject

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1. Tagore, The Religion of Man, p. 19.

2. cf. Ibid., p. 110 f., Rabindranath Tagore, My Reminiscences (London, 1917), p. 207.; Rabindranath Tagore, Creative Unity (London, 1922), p. 76 ff.

3. The Religion of Man, p. 202.

4. Sadhana, p. 78 f.

of my discussion. What I have tried to bring out in this book (The Religion of Man) is the fact that whatever name may have been given to the divine Reality it has found its highest place in the history of our religion owing to its human character, giving meaning to the idea of sin and sanctity, and offering an eternal background to all the ideals of perfection which have their harmony with man's own nature". "And I say of the Supreme Man that he is infinite in his essence, he is finite in his manifestation in us the individuals".<sup>1</sup> There are two points to be noted in these passages. Firstly, Tagore plays down traditional absolute conception of Brahman and he insists that the ultimate reality cannot be understood apart from humanity, a distinctive aspect of his religion which is fundamentally different from the religion of the Vedanta. Secondly, his God is the Supreme Man, or God humanized, in the words of Prof. P.T. Raju.<sup>2</sup> For Tagore, the absolute of the Vedanta is personality, the Supreme Person.

How does he define this personality? He writes: "Limitation of the Unlimited is personality: God is personal where he creates".<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere he writes: "As science is the liberation of our knowledge in the universal reason, ....., religion is the liberation of our individual personality in the universal Person who is human all the same". "It is for us to realize

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1. The Religion of Man, pp. 205, 118.

2. P.T. Raju, Idealistic Thought of India (London, 1953), p. 324.

3. Contemporary Indian Philosophy, eds. S. Radhakrishnan and J.H. Muirhead, (London, 1936), p. 37.



the Person who is in the heart of the All by the emancipated consciousness of our own spirituality". "The consciousness of the real within me seeks for its corroboration the touch of the Real outside me". "In this self of ours we are conscious of individuality, ..... In our soul we are conscious of the transcendental truth in us, the Universal, the Supreme Man; and this soul, the spiritual self, has its enjoyment in the renunciation of the individual self for the sake of the supreme soul".<sup>1</sup> He further describes the relation of the Supreme Person to the manifold appearances by saying that the Supreme is the unity of the manifold. Just as a true poem is not a construction according to the rules of rhyme and metre, but an expression or creation, so also the world is not a construction but an expression or creation.<sup>2</sup> In his explanation to Einstein of his concept of relation of God and the world he said: "If there be any truth absolutely unrelated to humanity, then for us it is absolutely non-existing". In the same conversation he said that "The infinite personality of Man comprehends the Universe. There cannot be any thing that cannot be subsumed by the personality, and this proves that the truth of the Universe is human truth".<sup>3</sup> Further, D.S. Sarma observes: "Tagore speaks of God as King, master, friend, father, poet, bridegroom or lover, and not as any mythological deity or avatar".<sup>4</sup> For Tagore "Reality is the

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1. The Religion of Man, pp. 193, 115, 131, and 181-182.

2. cf. Creative Unity, pp. 34-35.

3. The Religion of Man, pp. 225, 222.

4. D.S. Sarma, The Renaissance of Hinduism (Benares, 1944), p. 388.



the expression of personality, like a poem, like a work of art. The Supreme Being is giving himself in his world and I am making it mine, like a poem which I realize by finding myself in it .....From this ...I know that it has been given to the personal me by a personal being". "This feeling of perfection in love, which is the feeling of the perfect oneness, opens for us the gate of the world of the infinite One, who is revealed in the unity of all personalities; .....".<sup>1</sup>

All this leaves no doubt on the matter that for Tagore God was an infinite Personality in whom the subject and object are perfectly reconciled.<sup>2</sup> And this is the most outspoken rejection of Sankara's impersonal Brahman and the repudiation of the Vedanta identification of the subject and object in religion, the attempt "to merge completely the personal self in an impersonal entity which is without any quality or definition".

However much Tagore defined his religion in the thought-forms of the theistic conception of the God of the Brahma Samaj he still held the age-long conception of liberation as found in the traditional Vedantic religion. He affirmed: "The individual I am attains its perfect end when it realizes its freedom of harmony in the infinite I am. Then is its mukti, its deliverance from the thralldom of māyā, of appearance which springs from avidyā, from ignorance; .....".<sup>3</sup> Tagore men-

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1. Personality, pp. 69, 83-84.

2. cf. The Religion of Man, p. 106.

3. Sadhana, p. 85.

tions the Upanishads as his support, according to which "the key to cosmic consciousness, to God-consciousness, is in the consciousness of the soul".<sup>1</sup> He says that the separateness of our self from Brahman is an illusion or maya, "because it has no intrinsic reality of its own".<sup>2</sup> All these statements of Tagore obviously reflect the overlapping of two trends in his religious thought, namely traditional Hindu thinking and the theistic influence of the Brahma Samaj. The former trend can perhaps be traced back to the structure of thought displayed in his writings earlier than The Religion of Man in which the latter trend came more into view. Hence traditional Hindu thought may be taken as being ancillary to his strong belief in a personal God; for him life should be a journey through spiritual scenery of the most majestic kind and therefore the whole web of change in life should be a means to that end rather than a hindrance. To that extent, he differs from the Vedantists. That is to say, by reason of his religious cast of mind, Tagore is more interested in man than in the impersonal Brahman of Sankara. He believes that God is truth to be known through love and not through knowledge as in Sankara. Although Tagore has little sympathy for Sankara's impersonal Brahman yet he agrees with Sankara in saying that man is the appearance of Brahman. Tagore explains what he means by that appearance. For him the paintings on the canvas are more important than the can-

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1. Sadhana, p. 30.

2. Ibid., p. 79.

canvas on which they are painted. He writes: "The dream persists; it is more real than even bread which has substance and use. The painted canvas is durable and substantial; ... But the picture which no factory can produce is a dream, a maya, and yet it, not the canvas, has the meaning of ultimate reality".<sup>1</sup>

A little more detailed consideration of his works shows that Tagore also understood anthropology from his religious point of view. He observed: "We must not forget that life is here to express the eternal in us ..... Life is perpetual creation: it has its truth when it grows itself in the infinite".<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere he pointed out that "every true freedom that we may attain in any direction broadens our path of self-realization, which is in superseding the self ..... This implies a history of constant regeneration, a series of fresh beginnings and continual changes to the old .....".<sup>3</sup> Further, Tagore held that "there was a great chapter in the history of life on this earth when some irresistible inner force in man found its way into the scheme of things .....".<sup>4</sup> He went on to point out that "the immediate consciousness of reality in its purest form, unobscured by the shadow of self-interest, ..... gives us joy as does the self-revealing personality of our own" ..... and the "I am" in me crosses

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1. Tagore, Creative Unity, (London, 1922), p. 10.

2. Personality, p. 65.

3. The Religion of Man, pp. 55-56.

4. Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 27.

its finitude whenever it deeply realizes itself in the "Thou art" ..... "And thus life, which is an incessant explosion of freedom, finds its metre in a continual falling back in death. Every day is a death, every moment even"....., because directly a poem is fashioned, it is eternally freed from its genesis, it minimizes its history and emphasizes its independence". "I believe that the vision of Paradise is to be seen ....., in the beauty of the human face and the wealth of human life, .....".<sup>1</sup>

Tagore's two basic ideas can be deduced from the above statements, namely 1) for him life is like a poem; 2) and through the exercise of his freedom man can and should regenerate himself. All this is very suggestive when religion is understood from the standpoint of anthropology. Whatever the worth of such an understanding of one's religious experience may be, Tagore leaves no doubt on the matter that the achieving of one's authentic life depends basically upon freedom to take decisions - historical decisions. It is perhaps in this sense of Tagore's insistence on man's historical decisions orientated to fresh beginnings and continual changes to the old that striking parallels between his scheme of thinking and Bultmann's understanding of man in his radical historicity become obvious. How Tagore understands history depends on how he understands the traditional key concept called Maya. For Sankara Maya is neither real nor unreal: it neither is nor is not. But Tagore declares: "These Gold and lead, the rose and the

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1. Contemporary Indian Philosophy, pp. 35-36, 38, 43 and 45.

thorn, the sun and the planets<sup>7</sup> are dance-steps of the numbers in the arena of time and space, which weave the maya, the patterns of appearance, the incessant flow of change that ever is and is not".<sup>1</sup> He pictures Maya as "envelopment of avidya; ..... the black smoke that presages the fire of love". And elsewhere he speaks of it as the process by which finitude is woven by the Supreme Person, just as an artist weaves the art-product out of his imagination.<sup>2</sup> For him, the world, Maya, is matter of greater importance than the pure reality of the indeterminate and impersonal Brahman as his analogy of the picture and the canvas indicates. All this goes to show that his understanding of Maya is different from that of Sankara. As we have seen, the modern theologians of Hinduism do not separate history and the cosmic process, and we only need to call attention to the fact that for Tagore this distinction consists in "a change of rhythm" as shown in the passages. Tagore pointed out that "..... I would rather look forward to the opening of a new chapter in his man's history, after the cataclysm is over and the atmosphere rendered clean with the spirit of service and sacrifice .....".<sup>3</sup> Further, Tagore attaches signal importance to drawing or painting on the canvas. It is in this sense that we can detect a note of historiological presupposition in Tagore's system of ideas.

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1. The Religion of Man, p. 141 and cf. also Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 38.

2. Sadhana, p. 80, and cf. The Religion of Man, p. 141.

3. As quoted by D.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 344.

This close examination of Tagore's works suggest that in his system of ideas there are embedded three existential elements similar to those of Western existentialism. (i) Tagore insists on the individual's freedom to make decisions in his historic existence either to gain his true freedom or lose it. (ii) He cannot think of the ultimate reality apart from humanity. Just as existentialists insist that truth has no reality except in the existence of men so also does Tagore insist that "the truth of the Universe is human truth". (iii) In his language the drawing or painting is of value for us and not the canvas on which it is done. This means that he lays emphasis on personal history rather than world history.

S. Radhakrishnan (1888- ).

It has been well said that Prof. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is the most important creator of modern Hinduism. Since his eloquent exposition of modern Hinduism is highly academic, it is proper for us to make an appreciative analysis of the distinctive ideas of his religious thought and see how in some aspects his scheme of thinking comes close to Bultmann's existentialist theology. It is admittedly true to say that while Radhakrishnan is greatly influenced by the western Idealism he still remains the ablest exponent of Sankara's Idealism, viz. monism. Not only does he reflect Sankara's position correctly but he also vehemently argues for it. That by his own theory of integral experience, which will be discussed later in this chapter, Radhakrishnan improves upon Sankara's idea of the human personality can hardly be denied. He has written a considerable number of books and articles which



display his detailed understanding of the major religions of the world. His writings may be compared to those of the Cambridge philosopher, the late Charles Dunbar Broad, in so far as lucidity and grace of style go. His influence as a philosopher and as one of the greatest statesmen of the Republic of India is highly significant. His comments on the materialistic understanding of life and his appraisal of social and political movements, as spelled out in an autobiographical essay, "My Search for Truth", in Religion in Transition are admirable. Also in the same essay he sets forth his own definition of religion: "Religion is essentially a concern of the inner life ..... Its roots lie in the spirit of man ..... The deepest depths of the soul reflect the divine, when they are kept undimmed ..... To this end intense spiritual labour and moral activity are needed".<sup>1</sup>

Marlow observes that "Radhakrishnan's starting point is the Upanishads, as he shows in his early work, The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy, but he has a unique viewpoint in that he is steeped in Western as well as in Eastern philosophy and has lived in the west as scholar and a man of affairs".<sup>2</sup>

As is well known, the most typical formulation of modern Hinduism is that the destiny of the individual is not just a liberation from the bonds of nature, but a full realization

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, "My Search for Truth" in Religion in Transition, ed. Vergilius Ferm (London, 1937) pp. 20-21.

2. Radhakrishnan: An Anthology, ed. A.N. Marlow (London, 1952), p. 4.



of man's divine possibilities. To this idea, Radhakrishnan draws attention, explaining it, in classic fashion, from his idealistic view of life. Further, he has also given the weight of his advocacy to Prof. A.N. Whitehead's definition of religion: "What the individual does with his solitariness" and he qualifies it by saying that "it [religion] is an attempt to discover the ideal possibilities of human life, a quest for emancipation from immediate compulsions of vain and petty moods".<sup>1</sup> The ideal for him is the experience of the sage or the Hindu seer, "who finds his God in his deeper self ..... The seers see the Supreme in the self, and not in images".<sup>2</sup>

Sankara's philosophy had made a lasting impression on Radhakrishnan. Sankara was the most outstanding thinker of classical Hinduism.<sup>3</sup> Radhakrishnan's unalterable conviction is that the logic of the indeterminate Brahman of Sankara is unassailable. However, the negative teaching of Sankara is not wholly accepted by Radhakrishnan. He writes: "The anxiety to be loyal as far as possible to ..... Vedantism appears to be the explanation of much of the inconsistency of Sankara's philosophy ..... But when, with the Buddhist he [Sankara as a Vedantin] admits that the finite is illusory, his absolute becomes something in which all is lost and nothing is found again ..... But there is no denying that the positive method

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, An Idealist View of Life (London, 1932), p. 88.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, The Hindu View of Life (London, 1927), p. 32.

3. See add. n. on Classical Vedanta.

Sankara intends to pursue as a Vedantin and the negative method he does sometimes pursue as an interpreter of Buddhism end in conflict and contradiction".<sup>1</sup> But later on in his writings Radhakrishnan qualified this statement by saying: "The Upaniṣads and Sankara try to express the nature of the ultimate being in negative terms". "The eye goes not thither nor speech nor mind". There is a danger in these negative descriptions. By denying all attributes and relations we expose ourselves to the charge of reducing the ultimate being to bare existence which is absolute vacuity".<sup>2</sup> For Sankara the world is neither being nor non-being. But Radhakrishnan seems to be inclined towards looking upon it as both being and non-being. He writes: "The being of which we have experience is not absolute being. Whatever falls short in any degree of absolute reality has in it admixture of non-being. In the world of experience, we have a conflict between being and non-being. In and through their mutual hostility, the world exists. If there were no non-being, there would be no being".<sup>3</sup> This indicates that Radhakrishnan advocates the theory that the world both "is" and "is not" as against Sankara's theory of the world. That is, he slightly altered Sankara's concept of the world by bringing into focus the idea of the "relative reality of the world". Radhakrishnan's theory establishes a certain intelligible connection between the world

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore (London, 1918), pp. 116-117.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, An Idealist View of Life, pp. 101-2.

3. Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 283.

of change and the unchanging being. For him as P.T. Raju explains "maya is not illusion for man; it is real. The world is real, ..... It is real as man himself".<sup>1</sup>

Radhakrishnan also reinterprets Sankara's Absolute who is beyond human description and the conceptual understanding of man. For Sankara the Absolute is eternally cut off from the appearances: Brahman alone is real, without qualities, a pure being. Radhakrishnan, on the other hand, understands the Absolute as the universal mind. He observes: "God as the universal mind working with a conscious design, who is at once the beginning of the world, the author of its order, the principle of its progress, and the goal of its evolution, is not the God of religion unless we take into account the facts of religious consciousness".<sup>1a</sup> He elsewhere characterizes the Absolute as follows: "The Absolute is joy: God is love. Joy is self-existent reality, an absolute which does not depend on objects but only on itself".<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan brings out a new dimension of the Absolute not implied in classical Hindu writers' thought. He writes: "Becoming, which is the union of the two principles of being and non-being, is alone real .....".<sup>3</sup>

From these passages it can be noted that there are striking similarities between his understanding of the nature of Brah-

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1. P.T. Raju, The Philosophical Traditions of India (London, 1971), p. 231.

1a. An Idealist View of Life, p. 333.

2. Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 282.

3. The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy (London, 1920), p. 168.

man and that of Tagore and also that of Aurobindo Ghosh which we will see when we discuss his religious thought. Tagore's Absolute is the Supreme Person, "humanized", and only thus can human beings understand him. Radhakrishnan understands Brahman as definable by certain epithets or categories such as joy. How his definition of Brahman is akin to Aurobindo's view of the ultimate reality will be shown when we explain Aurobindo's position. On the whole, one cannot resist the conclusion that Radhakrishnan's chief contribution to Indian absolutism is his making clear that the Absolute can be reached positively, and not merely negatively as many orthodox Advaitins seem to hold.<sup>1</sup>

Another key concept with which almost every modern Hindu writer deals is that of the concept of karma. This single concept has had a profound and far-reaching influence on Indian thinking. Radhakrishnan as a logician and a religious-philosopher of modern Hinduism reinterprets the concept of karma as follows: "It is the psychological principle that our life carries within it a record that time cannot blur or death erase".<sup>2</sup> In one sense, Radhakrishnan does not seem to go beyond the fatalistic interpretation of karma. For him "it is the law of the conservation of moral energy. The vision of law and order is revealed in the Rta of the Rg-Veda. According to the principle of karma there is nothing uncertain or capricious in the moral world. We reap what we sow".<sup>3</sup> He adds: "The Mahābhā-

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1. I owe this idea to P.T. Raju, Idealistic Thought of India, p.350.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy. I (London, 1923) p. 350.

3. Ibid., p. 244.

rata believes in the force of karma, or the fatality of the act ..... Attempts are made to reconcile the law of karma with the freedom of man".<sup>1</sup> He concedes that this fatalistic interpretation assumes some importance in the popular understanding of the doctrine of karma. He argues that "there ~~are~~ adhiṣṭhāna, or the basis or centre from which we work, kartr̥ or doer, karaṇa or the instrumentation of nature, ceṣṭa or effort and daiva or fate. The last is the power or powers other than human, the cosmic principle which stands behind, modifying the work and disposing of its fruits in the shape of act and its reward".<sup>2</sup> Krishna says: The fourfold order was created by Me according to the division of quality and work ..... "Gītā IV. 13". Radhakrishnan comments that "the emphasis is on guṇa (aptitude) and karma (function) and not jāti (birth)".<sup>3</sup> In his book, The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads, he writes: "There is no doctrine that is so valuable in life and conduct as the karma theory ..... karma inspires hope for the future and resignation of the past". And in the same book he claims that "as a matter of fact, the Upanishads hold that we can be free from karma only by social service ..... karma rightly understood does not discourage moral effort ... ..".<sup>4</sup> For Radhakrishnan, as B.G. Gokhale comments: "while

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy I (London, 1923), p. 245.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, The Bhagavadgītā (London, 1948), p. 48.

3. Ibid., p. 160.

4. S. Radhakrishnan, The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads (London: New York, 1924), pp. 125, 121-22.

karma is social, mukti is individual and it is only when the social role is played socially that individuality can find perfection".<sup>1</sup> There are two points to be noted in Radhakrishnan's statement quoted above: 1) In saying that 'we can be free from karma only by social service' he is probably making it plain that he cannot agree with the idea that karma doctrine is inconsistent with social service. 2) The individual's salvation or freedom cannot be completed apart from the collective experience of the community. His own words are: "What looms over us is no dark fate but our own past. We are not victims of a driving doom". "When we perform disinterested work we reach freedom".<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in Radhakrishnan's view the ideas of heaven and hell which had been worked out by the Vedic seers came to be associated with the more intellectual and metaphysical doctrine of karma. Hence for him, as Gokhale explains "karma was developing as a concept of value with ethical as well as social implications and had cosmic as well as psychological aspects".<sup>3</sup> All these statements obviously indicate that in Radhakrishnan's opinion karma is an attempt to explain the universe in rational terms since "it is the law of the conservation of moral energy". One wonders whether Radhakrishnan's interpretation of karma understood in terms of psychological, social and cosmic demands of life has not stemmed from his understanding of the

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1. B.G. Gokhale, op. cit., p. 115.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, The Philosophy of the Upanisads, p. 122.

3. B.G. Gokhale, op. cit., p. 123.



western Christian Church and its doctrines. It is probably correct to say that Radhakrishnan was trying to show to the western world that the age-long conception of karma is in one sense metaphysically and epistemologically a sound doctrine.

However, there is a positive approach to the understanding of karma in his thinking. That is, he seems to go far beyond the popular conception of karma. He strongly affirms the individual's freedom as over against the fatalistic conception of that concept; he clarifies its mechanical aspect in such a way that human freedom is safeguarded. For Radhakrishnan karma leaves room for freedom, whereby an individual has the chance to improve his lot. He makes this point clear by using the game of cards as an illustration: "The cards in the game of life are given to us. We do not select them. They are traced to our past Karma, but we can call as we please, lead what suit we will, and as we play, we gain or lose. And there is freedom".<sup>1</sup> "Karma is not so much a principle of retribution as one of continuity". "Karma or connection with the past is not inconsistent with creative freedom".<sup>2</sup> He writes: "He [mān] is mightier than his karma. If the law is all, then there is no real freedom possible .... The spiritual nature is the basis of his initiative and endeavour. The mechanical part is under constraint".<sup>3</sup> He

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1. The Hindu View of Life, p. 75.

2. An Idealist View of Life, pp. 275 and 276.

3. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy I, pp. 246-47, and The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads, p. 122.



further argues that "we are not puppets moved hither and thither by the blind impersonal necessity of omnipotent matter or the sovereignty of divine providence". "The freedom of will possessed by self-conscious individuals makes possible sin and discord". "It is our community with the Eternal that endows us with the creative quality. It helps us to remake the environment .....".<sup>1</sup> He further explains that karma is not inconsistent with freedom. It is a condition not a destiny. In the Gītā it is even a creative force. "While it [karma] regards the past as determined, it allows that the future is only conditioned .....". "Unfortunately, the theory of Karma became confused with fatality in India when man himself grew feeble and was disinclined to do his best. It was made into an excuse for inertia and timidity and was turned into a message of despair and not of hope ..... I have said enough to indicate that such a philosophy of despair is not the necessary outcome of the doctrine of Karma".<sup>2</sup> The twofold idea of divine grace and necessity of performance of one's assigned karma in the spirit of yoga to secure that grace ultimately led Radhakrishnan to recognize that "Karma is not a mechanical principle but a spiritual necessity".<sup>3</sup> It is precisely in this sense that Radhakrishnan goes far beyond the fatalistic view of karma. Moreover, his insistence on "the idea of freedom of the will

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, "Fragments of a Confession", in The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan, ed. Paul A. Schilpp (New York, 1952), pp. 42 and 43.

2. The Hindu View of Life, pp. 75, 76-77.

3. Ibid., p. 73.

as that which can remake the environment" reflects a new and positive meaning he gives to history as opposed to the traditional understanding of history. This is, indeed, a point of comparison with Bultmann's understanding of history as embodying meaning in the moment of decision.

We have alluded already to the fact that Radhakrishnan was greatly influenced by Sankara's logic and religious thought. Hence it is not surprising that Radhakrishnan never tires of explaining his own view of religious experience in Sankara's idealistic fashion: "In the experience of itself the self is wholly integrated and is therefore both the knower and the known, but it is not so in any intellectual description of the experience". He adds: "The consubstantiality of the spirit in man and God is the conviction fundamental to all spiritual wisdom ..... The greatest text of the Upanishads affirms it --- tat tvam asi (That art Thou). It is a simple statement of an experienced fact".<sup>1</sup> Whatever the logical force of such an argument, Radhakrishnan's insistence on the knowledge of one's self as being consubstantial with the divine being perhaps springs from the principle of self-awareness derived from introspection - an indefinite enlargement of one's integrated self. This sequel to mystical experience as the source and goal of life is repeatedly stressed in his writings. The quality of mystical knowledge is described by the terms, "self-established", "self-evidencing", self-luminous".<sup>2</sup> For him,

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1. An Idealist View of Life, pp. 96, 103-4.

2. Ibid., p. 92.

mystical intuition is described as "supreme awareness, the intimately felt presence".<sup>1</sup>

All this eloquent explanation of mystical experience, more specifically, integral experience, points to his burning conviction that "the unchanging substance of all religious experience is the evolution of man's consciousness".<sup>2</sup> This obviously, in turn, implies self-consciousness which enables man to look reflectively and critically at himself, at his powers. For Radhakrishnan, "the reflective capacity of the human mind ..... is the essence of self-conscious intelligence to look before and after and to vary action according to circumstances".<sup>3</sup> In this direction indicated here he goes one step further to argue that "to inquire into his true self, to live in and from it, to determine by its own energy what it shall be inwardly and what it shall make of its outward circumstances, to found the whole life on the power and truth of spirit is mokṣa or spiritual freedom".<sup>4</sup>

One cannot avoid the impression that for Radhakrishnan integral experience is the sole and sure means of spiritual freedom.

It is against this background of his understanding of one's religious experience that Radhakrishnan goes on to explain that the "foundation of St Paul's Christianity is a vision,

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, Eastern Religions and Western Thought (Oxford, 1959), p. 50.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, "Fragments of a Confession" in The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan, p. 77.

3. An Idealist View of Life, p. 262.

4. Eastern Religions and Western Thought, p. 352.

not an external revelation ....., "<sup>1</sup> "And the direct apprehension of Reality is incommunicable (II Cor. 12:2)".<sup>2</sup> In so far as Paul's experience as stated in II Cor. 12:2 is concerned, Radhakrishnan puts it briefly and pointedly that the direct vision of Reality is beyond human speech. His statements about Paul's experience show that he finds it hard to accept that Paul's conversion experience is not a matter of self-awareness derived from introspection.

Further, in Radhakrishnan's system of ideas the man-ward aspect of religion appears with particular urgency. For instance, as a comment on the verse in the Gītā 9:34 he observes: "..... The way to rise out of our ego-centred consciousness to the divine plane is through focusing of all our energies, intellectual, emotional and volitional on God. Then our whole being is transformed and lifted up into the unity and universality of spirit".<sup>3</sup> This obviously reflects his traditional Hindu philosophic position, but one wonders whether this position can escape the difficulty of inwardizing one's religious experience. Taking his stand on the Upanishadic teaching: "Some one who is wise, desiring eternal life, sees the inner self by turning the eyes inward", Radhakrishnan brings out with explicitness the implications of the theory of inwardization. He comments: "Inward meditation is the way to spiritual insight".<sup>4</sup>

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1. Eastern Religions and Western Thought, p. 221.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, Religion in a Changing World, p. 105.

3. S. Radhakrishnan, The Bhagavadgītā, pp. 254-55.

4. S. Radhakrishnan, Religion and Society (London, 1947), p. 67, cited by W. Stewart, India's Religious Frontier (London, 1964), p. 98.

This makes it clear that Radhakrishnan's theory of the man-ward aspect of religion undoubtedly individualizes the category of freedom of the will giving supreme and sole importance to the idea of the God-ward endeavour of the human spirit. This distinctive idea of individualizing the category of freedom in his scheme of thinking may well be similar to Bultmann's idea of an authentic life on the basis of the individual's historical decisions for God.

Furthermore, Radhakrishnan points out that "Each individual is his own authentic self ..... Each has to tread his path".<sup>1</sup> He writes: "Man's true and essential greatness is individual. The scriptures could point out the road but each man must travel it for himself".<sup>2</sup> "The finite as finite must be transcended".<sup>3</sup>

A brief survey of Dr. Radhakrishnan's understanding of self would shed some light on his main position. For him "the human self is an emergent aspect of the world process and not a substance different in kind from the process itself".<sup>4</sup> Arapura paraphrases D.M. Datta's statement of Radhakrishnan's concept of self as follows : "It [the human self] is an organized whole ..... The more he unifies his life in pursuit of ideals, the more organized, integrated and perfect does his life become".<sup>5</sup>

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1. Recovery of Faith, p. 180.

2. Eastern Religions and Western Thought, p. 354.

3. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy II (London, 1926), p. 626.

4. Radhakrishnan, An Idealist View of Life, p. 266.

5. J.G. Arapura, Radhakrishnan and Integral Experience (London, 1966), p. 145.

Radhakrishnan's understanding of self is well brought out by Prof. D.M. Datta in this way: "The more self is developed the greater is the reality it can absorb and identify itself with".<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan writes: "The peculiar privilege of the human self is that he can consciously join and work for the whole and embody in his whole life the purpose of the whole".<sup>2</sup>

It is worthy of note that this tendency, namely the human self in the context of the whole in Radhakrishnan's thinking is indeed significant and definitely an improvement on the traditional Hindu conception of salvation which is so completely individualistic. This means that, while Sankara's conception of salvation concerned itself with an intuitive knowledge of Brahman as the surest means of one's ultimate end of life (Tat Tvam asi, That art Thou), Radhakrishnan, does not rest content with such a concept of individualistic salvation. For him, the idea of the self as achieving its true fulfilment within the context of community is utterly lacking in classical Hinduism. Hence, he insists that the experience of the true yogin or 'Jeevanmukta' cannot be complete apart from his complete involvement with society. This important current in his thought explains a more definite point of difference between the modern Hindu interpretation of the individual and the traditional Hindu understanding of the human self in which far too little attention was given to the place of the individual in the community.

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1. D.M. Datta, The Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy (Calcutta, 1952), p. 90, quoted by Arapura, op. cit., p. 152.

2. An Idealist View of Life, pp. 273-74.



Radhakrishnan's chief further contribution to the modern version or formulation of Hinduism is that he develops his own concept of history. In one sense he seems to give a spiritual interpretation to the meaning of history. For him, "The meaning of history is to make all men prophets to establish a kingdom of free spirits". "History" for him, "is not a cyclic movement. It is full of new things, because God works in it and reveals Himself in it .....".<sup>1</sup> In another sense, he breaks a new ground in the traditional understanding of history. He holds that "man is not at the mercy of inexorable fate. If he wills, he can improve on his past record. There is no inevitability of history".<sup>2</sup> "By a change in mental and spiritual disposition, we can check the rapid decline and prepare for ourselves a new destiny".<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere he argues that "man is essentially a remaker. He is not content with the pattern of the past .....". "In Indian thought we have both existentialist distress and rational reflection". "Man not only is, but he knows that he is. His being is open to himself". "The contingency of history is due to the free choice of men ..... There is no predetermined pattern. There is the play of the contingent, the unforeseen; the human will is unpredicatable". "The future is boundless and its possibilities unlimited"....."It is wrong to think that we are in the grip of relentless determinism, and cannot alter the shape of things to come". "Man

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, "Fragments of A Confession" in The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan, pp. 30, 42, quoted by B.G. Gokhale op. cit., p. 21.

2. Recovery of Faith, p. 4.

3. S. Radhakrishnan, 'My Search for Truth' in Religion in Transition, pp. 52-53.



can cause new currents to surge up in history ..... No blind impersonal fate rules the world"..... "Karma is used to account for the conditions of life but man directs his destiny". "He man can fling a flaming torch into the darkness of the future".<sup>1</sup> For him, "history is not a meaningless repetition but a creative process determined by the free acts of the individuals ..... We can remake the earth in its likeness if we truly believe and practise the life of spirit".<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, in his discussion elsewhere on the concept of human freedom Radhakrishnan remarks: "The future has yet to be made. Our present choices give a new form even to the past so that what it means depends on what we do now".<sup>3</sup> It is exactly here that Radhakrishnan comes close to the existentialists' understanding of the human being in history..

"Existentialism, as he understands it, is a Transitional Phase of Individual Development".<sup>4</sup> He never ceases to emphasize that "he man has to realize new possibilities".<sup>5</sup>

These statements explain why he gives a new and positive meaning to history. This survey of Radhakrishnan's religious thought suggests that there are striking similarities between his thought and existentialist thinking. For instance, (i) he brought out a new dimension of reality, i.e. "Becoming which

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, Religion in A Changing World, pp. 16, 61, 67, 137, 142-45, and 153.

2. Eastern Religions and Western Thought, p. 129.

3. S. Radhakrishnan, "Fragments of a Confession" in The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan, p. 42.

4. Ibid., p. 59.

5. Religion in a Changing World, p. 95.

is the union of two principles of being and non-being, is alone real". Kierkegaard also reached the same conclusion: "As soon as the being which corresponds to the truth comes to be empirically concrete, the truth is put in process of becoming, .....".<sup>1</sup> For him "God, the absolutely Eternal, is to be grasped in the becoming of existence, .....".<sup>2</sup> Just as existentialists questioned philosophical idealism which could not establish an intelligible relation between the eternal and the temporal so also did Radhakrishnan question the traditional concept of Brahman as it is itself, as immutable and as eternally cut off from appearances. (ii) Over against the fatalistic conception of karma he insisted on human freedom, "freedom of the will possessed by self-conscious individuals ..... which helps us to remake the environment". For him, man is essentially a remaker. (iii) Just as the wholehearted champions of existentialism insist on personal history and the play of the contingent so also does Radhakrishnan lay a consistent emphasis on the idea of history as a creative process determined by the free acts of the individuals. For him, "the contingency of history is due to the free choice of men". That is, Radhakrishnan stresses an existential understanding of history as embodying meaning in the moment of decision.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

Gandhi's idea of Swaraj ('self rule', national freedom) paved

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1. Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific Postscript, Tr. from the Danish by David F. Swenson (London, 1941), p. 170.
  2. Kierkegaard: Concluding Unscientific Postscript, as quoted in The Search for Being, p. 51.

the way for the self-respect of his countrymen that first earned him the title of Mahatma (Great Soul). It was Rabinathan Tagore who first addressed him in this form.

Gandhi's programme of self-purification for the touchable Hindu through the service of the untouchables was particularly telling and constituted a challenge and a call for the whole nation. C.F. Andrews remarks that Gandhi did not belong to any of the new reforming sects of Hinduism. He is a conservative in religion. But, nevertheless, it will be noted that just as the most important thinkers of renascent Hinduism especially Radhakrishnan believed in the idea of soul - force so Gandhi affirmed that the substantial strength of one's religious experience springs from within - his ultimate appeal was always to the still small voice within. D.S. Sarma put Gandhi's whole religion in a nut-shell as follows: "(1) his absolute faith in God, (2) his perfect surrender to His will, (3) his belief in the brotherhood not only of all human beings but of all living beings, (4) his spirit of renunciation and (5) his ideal of continual service to his fellow creatures".<sup>1</sup> S.K. George observes: "Gandhi's whole philosophy of thought and action is rooted in the bed-rock of Truth". "It is a practical application of the teaching of Christ that he that loseth his life shall find it; that one realizes one's true and large life in the pursuit of the eternal values, even though the way to it may lie through the physical body".<sup>2</sup> It is not difficult to

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1. D.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 566.

2. S.K. George, Gandhi's Challenge to Christianity (London, 1939), pp. 36, 48.

show that this idea of the denial of the self as the principle of gaining one's life comes very close to the focal point of Jesus' teaching on true discipleship: 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me', Mk. 8:34. It is generally admitted that Gandhi was probably greatly influenced by Jesus' words and adopted them as one of the essential principles of his religious life. Gandhi's understanding of man's nature points to the fact that evil in human nature takes away its bloom and beauty. He points out that "man's destined purpose is to conquer old habits, to overcome evil in him and to restore good to its rightful place ..... Not until we have reduced ourselves to nothingness can we conquer the evil in us".<sup>1</sup> For him, "The word 'Satya' (Truth) is derived from 'Sat' which means being. And nothing is or exists in reality except Truth. That is why 'Sat' or Truth is perhaps the most important name of God. In fact it is more correct to say that Truth is God than to say that God is Truth".<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere Gandhi writes: "Of late, instead of saying God is Truth I have been saying Truth is God, in order more fully to define my religion ..... Denial of God we have known. Denial of Truth we have not known".<sup>3</sup> This Truth, Gandhi declares, is the Law of the Universe. He writes: ".....; there is an unalterable Law governing everything and every being that exists or lives. It is not a blind law; for

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1. Young India, 20-12-'28, quoted in M.K. Gandhi, Hindu Dharma (Ahmedabad, 1950), pp. 107, 109.

2. Extract from Yeravda Mandir by M.K. Gandhi (Ahmedabad, 1932) quoted in Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, ed. Ronald Duncan, (London, 1971), p. 41.

3. Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 21.

no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings ..... That Law, then, which governs all life is God. Law and law-giver are one".<sup>1</sup>

Further, Gandhi says: "One can realise Truth and ahimsa /Law of life/ only by ceaseless striving ..... Realizing the limitations of the flesh, we strive day by day towards the ideal with what strength we have in us". "Nirvana", as Gandhi understood it, "is undoubtedly not utter extinction ....., Nirvana is utter extinction of all that is base in us, all that is vicious in us, all that is corrupt and corruptible in us. Nirvana is not like the black, dead peace of the grave, but the living peace, the living happiness of a soul which is conscious of itself, and conscious of having found its own abode in the heart of the Eternal".<sup>2</sup> In Gandhi's opinion, "the act of renunciation is a deliberate act, not done in ignorance. It is therefore a regeneration". "....., renunciation is essential for our very existence, for our soul". "The secret of happy life lies in renunciation. Renunciation is life".<sup>3</sup>

Gandhi's social concern was, indeed, remarkable as he made a landmark in the history of uprooting social injustice, especially untouchability. His social concern or the ideal to which he urged the nation to attain must be understood from

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1. Gandhi's Ideas, ed. C.F. Andrews (London, 1929), p. 43.

2. Hindu Dharma, pp. 223-24, and 242.

3. Harijan 30-1-'37; Harijan, 24-2-'46, quoted in Hindu Dharma, pp. 38, 40 and 42.

two angles. As a Sanatani Hindu he held fast to the idea of Varna Dharma; he meant by the Varna Dharma the four divisions of people in India, as these define duties; they confer no privileges. Gandhi regarded Varandharma as healthy division of work based on birth and stated that the ideas of caste are a perversion of the original intention. He writes: "There is no question with me" of superiority or inferiority. "It is purely a question of duty".<sup>1</sup> And as a social reformer he characterized the theory of untouchability as being "repugnant to reason and to the instinct of pity or love". He adds: "Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing".<sup>2</sup>

To him "Religion is the service of the helpless .....".<sup>3</sup>

"The purpose of life is undoubtedly to know oneself ..... The instrument of this knowledge is boundless selfless service".<sup>4</sup>

The meaningful content of Gandhi's two important ideas, namely renunciation and 'ahimsa' or 'Law of life' must now be discussed at some length. For him renunciation for all practical purposes is the same as nirvana and both these terms mean nothing but regeneration of the individual. His understanding of renunciation as regeneration implies that for him the rule of life was no longer the whole round of ritual but had

1. Young India, 23-4-25.

2. Gandhi's Idea, pp. 41 and 42.

3. Young India, August 14, 1924, quoted in The Essential Gandhi : An Anthology, ed. Louis Fischer (London, 1963), p. 229.

4. Letter to an English friend, Muriel Lester, June 21, 1932, quoted in Mahadeva Desai, The Diary of Mahadevi, (Ahmedabad, 1953), p. 184.



to come to terms with the new dimension of life. How can man achieve regeneration? Gandhi's answer is: man cannot achieve regeneration unless he risks himself. This idea of regeneration is indeed a striking parallel to Tagore's idea of life as a history of constant regeneration, a series of fresh beginnings and continual changes to the old.

For Gandhi, "Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant".<sup>1</sup> Non-violence is not just a negative quality but a positive force of love and patience, born of the conviction that human beings can be persuaded and morally converted so as to make them act in the ways of truth and righteousness.<sup>2</sup> "Non-violence is nothing other than the omnipotence of love which forgives instead of punishing, which suffers for the other instead of wounding him, which does not externally force (a person into doing a thing) but conquers from within. The power of such non-violent love transforms an erring man into a true man", (my tr.. .... Gewaltlosigkeit ist also nichts anderes als die Allmacht der Liebe, die statt zu strafen vergibt, die statt zu verwunden für den anderen selber leidet, die nicht äußerlich zwingt, sondern von innen her überwindet. Die Macht solcher gewaltlosen Liebe schafft irrenden Menschen in wahre Menschen um").<sup>3</sup>

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1. Extract from Non-Violence in Peace and War by M.K. Gandhi (Ahmedabad, 1942), cited in Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 49.

2. cf. Selections from Gandhi, ed. N.K. Bose (Ahmedabad, 1948), Chap. IX, pp. 142 ff.

3. O. Wolff, Mahatma Und Christus (Berlin, 1955), p. 27.



"For me", says Gandhi, "non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle. It is the rule and the breadth of my life ..... Not violence, not untruth, but non-violence, Truth is the law of our being".<sup>1</sup> For him, "Ahimsa means mokṣa and mokṣa is the realization of the Truth".<sup>2</sup> "I cannot practise ahimsa without practising the religion of service, and I cannot find the truth without practising the religion of ahimsa. And there is no religion other than truth".<sup>3</sup> "Ahimsa is the Law of life and the progressive recognition of the Law and its application in practice is the fundamental distinctiveness of man from the beast".<sup>4</sup> Gandhi also affirmed the identity of ahimsa with "uttermost selflessness" which, he said, "means complete freedom from regard to one's body".<sup>5</sup>

All these statements show how Gandhi advocated the theory of ahimsa taking his stand on the religion which hinges on two basic assumptions, namely Truth and the law of the universe which for him is Love. Hence P.T. Raju summarily gives the

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1. Extract from Non-Violence in Peace and War by M.K. Gandhi, cited in Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 58.
  2. Young India, 12-11-'25, cited in Hindu Dharma, p. 138.
  3. Young India, 14-8-'24, cited in Hindu Dharma, p. 11.
  4. Harijan, 26 Sept. 1936.
  5. As quoted by M.M. Thomas, The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance (London, 1969), p. 196.

essentials of Gandhi's philosophy of Truth (Satyāgraha)<sup>1</sup> as follows: 1. God is Truth and Truth is God, the two are identical ..... 2. Since God is Truth, Truth is the Law of life; the Law and the Lawgiver are one. 3. The essential nature of God is love. So the Law of Truth is the Law of Love ..... 6. One should also abide in Love, since Truth is God and God is Love. Satyāgraha will then mean abiding in Love ..... The above is, in essence, the spiritual and philosophical basis of Gandhi's practice. Satyāgraha is obstinate and unflinching adherence to the Law of Truth and Love so to non-violence".<sup>2</sup>

This summary makes it clear that Gandhi's understanding of non-violence or 'ahimsa' springs from his concept of God and his relation to the world. In this sense, his religious thought expressed through the categories like Law of life, satyagraha, non-violence and above all love is built upon his own reason and conscience, to be more precise, his understanding of the philosophy of religion.

Muzumdar observes: "While he was an absolutist in his philosophy of life and in his fundamental loyalties, Gandhi was a relativist and pragmatist in his mode of operation".....

'For, under Swaraj, too, I would not hesitate to advise those who would bear arms to do so and fight for the country'".<sup>3</sup>

In his famous editorial on The Doctrine of the Sword (Young India, August 11, 1920) Gandhi categorically affirmed that when there was "only a choice between cowardice and violence", he would advise violence".<sup>4</sup> "Cowardice is wholly inconsistent

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1. See add. note on satyāgraha.

2. P.T. Raju, The Philosophical Traditions of India, pp. 223-24.

3. H.T. Muzumdar, Mahatma Gandhi: Peaceful Revolutionary (New York: London, 1952), pp. 102-3 quoting Young India, 1919-1922, pp. 658-662. 4. Young India, 1919-1922, p. 260

with non-violence".<sup>1</sup>

Gandhi never denied the reality of the world but he never explained what he meant by Maya. And as for his teaching on God he never ceased to emphasize that the essential nature of God is Love. For him, the Law of Truth is the Law of Love. He writes: "(Whilst) everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing power or spirit is God ..... God is life, Truth, Light, He is Love".<sup>2</sup> "To me God is Truth and Love, God is ethics and morality, God is fearlessness ..... He is all things to all men ..... He is ever forgiving for He always gives us the chance to repent. He is the greatest democrat the world ever knows for He leaves us "unfettered" to make our own choice between evil and good .....".<sup>3</sup> In Gandhi's own words: "I am part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity ..... If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave, I would proceed there immediately. But I know I cannot find Him apart from humanity".<sup>4</sup> For him, "His divine essence is both Truth (Satya) and Harmlessness (Ahimsa)".<sup>5</sup> From these statements it becomes obvious for

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1. Extract from Non-Violence in Peace and War by M.K. Gandhi, cited in Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 55.
  2. Young India, October 11, 1928, quoted in The Essential Gandhi An Anthology, p. 229.
  3. Young India, March 5, 1925, quoted in Hindu Dharma, pp. 228-29.
  4. The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi, eds. R.K. Prabhu and U.R. Rao (2nd ed. Madras, 1946), p. 30, quoted by H.T. Muzumdar, op. cit., pp. 30-31.
  5. Gandhi's Ideas, p. 47.

us that there is a striking similarity between Gandhi's understanding of God and Tagore's Absolute described as the Supreme person. Like Tagore, he contends that he cannot understand God apart from humanity. His understanding of God gives us the clue to his concept of human freedom. That is, we detect here ample evidence for his crystallized teaching on the aspect of human freedom and Truth and Ahimsa as essential attributes of the divine being.

Another aspect of Gandhi's religious thought concerns his concept of history. A philosophy of history is not a dominant concept in Gandhi's thought. However, a close examination of his works suggest that in his system there is an implicit existential understanding of history even though he does not consistently elaborate it. For Gandhi, "History is really a record of every interruption of the even working of the forces of love or of the soul", and that "the sum total of the energy of mankind is not to bring us down but to lift us up, and that is the result of the definite, if unconscious, working of the law of Love".<sup>1</sup> Gandhi maintained: "Only remember that Truth is not one of the many qualities that we name. It is the living embodiment of God, it is the only life, and I identify Truth with the fullest life, and that is how it becomes a concrete thing. God is his whole creation, the whole existence, and service of all that exists --- Truth --- is service of God".<sup>2</sup> The central teaching of the Gītā which he so unwaver-

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1. As quoted by B.G. Gokhale, op. cit., p. 20.

2. Harijan, 25 May. 1935.

ingly followed had left him with an impression that "man is the maker of his destiny in the sense that he has the freedom of choice as to the manner in which he uses that freedom. But man cannot control results, and when he thinks he does, he comes to grief".<sup>1</sup> A moment's reflection of these last two statements will convince one that in Gandhi's thinking there is embedded the idea of panentheism which is more fully developed in the Western school thought associated with process philosophers like A.N. Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. That is, in Gandhi's system, as with the process philosophers, and more so with the Bultmannian wing, the idea of God is not a mere abstraction but is revealed in the contingent stuff of human living - God is not a being "out there" in an immutable untroubled perfection but is in time and history.

Moreover, Gandhi's acceptance of an essential connection between the individual and the general good, more precisely, of the principle that he was his brother's keeper, forms the organic centre of his philosophy of life.

This study of Gandhi's system of ideas shows that there are implied in his thought certain existential elements. For instance: (i) Gandhi identifies truth with the fullest life and he cannot think of transcendent Being apart from humanity. Just as existentialists maintain truth has no reality except in the existence of men so also does Gandhi hold that the being of God is not a mere abstraction but concrete reality. For

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1. Harijan, 23 March, 1940.

him also, as with Tagore, the truth of the universe is human truth. (ii) As opposed to the traditional fatalistic concept of karma Gandhi insists that God leaves us "unfettered" to make our own choice between evil and good. Just as existentialists insist that man achieves his existence in concrete situations, in the here and now, in his individual responsibility and decision where in hazarding himself he can gain or lose himself so also does Gandhi insist that man cannot achieve regeneration unless he risks himself. (iii) Just as existentialists stress the idea that man's being is open to himself and that the human being chooses its genuine existence by becoming a "resolved" self so also does Gandhi stress the idea that "man is the maker of his destiny in the sense that he has the freedom of choice as to the manner in which he uses that freedom". This means that he lays emphasis on man's use of his freedom of the will. Man achieves the possibilities of life through his decisions in his historic existence. Every moment is the now of responsibility, of decision. It is this philosophy of human existence which issues in the unity of history for existentialists. For Gandhi, this unity of history is understood from the standpoint of "every interruption of the even working of the forces of love or of the human soul". (Incidentally, it is to be observed that the phrase "the forces of the human soul" is a terminology peculiar to the Hindu theologian like Gandhi. In fact, it means the power of the human will. Here in this connection, it may suggest the idea that man's being is a potentiality to be).



Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950)

Writing in 1928 about the Neo-Vedantic movement<sup>1</sup> started by Swami Vivekananda, Romain Rolland says in his book - Prophets of the New India:- "The most noble representative of this great Neo-Vedantic spirit was - and still is - Aurobindo Ghosh, the foremost of Indian thinkers, from whom intellectual and religious India is awaiting a new revelation".<sup>2</sup> At the age of seven Aurobindo was sent to England and given the education according to the western tradition. During his student career he proved himself to be a classical scholar of note. On his return to his motherland he served in the education service of the state of Baroda. Later on, by taking an active part in politics sometimes involving violent activities, he associated himself with the then nationalist leaders whose lot it was to suffer, even to be jailed, for the cause of national independence at the hands of the British regime. Accordingly he was arrested by the British. It was the most momentous change in his life when Aurobindo left politics and began a life of renunciation and resignation. That is, during his imprisonment he had undergone a dramatic spiritual change in his life - he turned philosopher and yogi. After release he left British India and went to Pondicherry which was at that time under French rule. There he began practising yoga and expounding his philosophy.

Aurobindo had a profound belief in evolution, the goal of which he saw to be the divinization of man. He held fast to the idea

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1. See add. n. on Neo-Vedanta.

2. Romain Rolland, Prophets of the New India, tr. E.F. Malcolm-Smith (London, 1930), p. 502.

that humanity can be spiritually unified and collectively redeemed, and if this ideal is actualized the whole universe will then be transformed into "Kingdom of God on earth", to use his oft-repeated phrase. Through the literature circulated from the centre of the Ashram founded by him at Pondicherry, S. India, his life and work still exert a considerable influence on the intellectuals of India.<sup>1</sup>

His teaching on anthropology can be seen from the study of his metaphysical masterpiece, his magnum opus, The Life Divine. It was to his credit that Sri Aurobindo condemned the rigidities of organized religion, be it orthodox Christianity or Hinduism, with its pettifogging legalism and the hard crust of the doctrine of the Law of karma. He writes: "I am a Tāntric. I regard the world as born of Ānanda (bliss) and living by Ānanda, wheeling from Ānanda to Ānanda. Ānanda and Śakti, these are the two real terms of existence".<sup>2</sup> (A tantric is generally a follower of the Śākta philosophy and is a worshipper of Śakti, the feminine and energy aspect of the absolute as Siva). His philosophy can be traced back particularly to the Saiva and Śākta Āgamas (Āgamas literally mean Scriptures, generally sectarian scriptures as distinguished from the Sruti (i.e. that which is heard or given) or Veda which is a non-sectarian scripture).

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1. His greatest works are: The Life Divine, (2 Vols, 1939-40) The Message of the Gita, as interpreted by Sri Aurobindo (ed. Anilbaran Roy, London, 1938); The Ideal of Human Unity in the Human Cycle, etc. (Pondicherry, 1962); The Yoga and Its Objects (6th ed. Pondicherry, 1952); The Future Poetry (Pondicherry, 1953); The Mother (8th ed. Pondicherry, 1956).

2. As quoted by P.T. Raju, Idealistic Thought of India, p. 299.

Aurobindo abandoned the concept of karma as a mechanical deterministic entity. He held the view that "we have first to observe that a law or a chain of Karma is only an outward machinery and cannot be elevated to a greater position as the sole and absolute determinant of the life-workings of the cosmos, unless the cosmos is itself entirely mechanical in its character ..... Our spirit, our self must be greater than its karma. There is a Law, but there is also spiritual freedom: .....; an inner freedom already begins to intervene and, the more we go within, the soul's power of choice is increasingly felt: ..... It is not conceivable that the spirit within is an automation in the hands of Karma, a slave in this life of its past action: .....".<sup>1</sup> "The idea of retribution of Karma as a compensation for the injustice of life and Nature is a feeble basis for the theory, for it puts forward a shallow and superficial human feeling and standard as the sense of the cosmic Law and is based on an unsound reasoning; there must be some other and stronger foundations for the law of Karma".<sup>2</sup> "Our life is affected not only by its own energies but by the energies of others and by universal Forces, and all this vast interplay cannot be determined in its results solely by the one factor of an all-governing moral law and its exclusive attention to the merits and demerits, the sins and virtues of individual human beings".<sup>3</sup> This implies that he did not agree with the

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1. Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine Revised and enlarged ed. 2 Vols. (In 3) (Calcutta, 1939) II, pp. 784-85.

2. Ibid., pp. 790-91.

3. Ibid., p. 795.

notion of causality of karma and for him it does not provide "an answer to a search for the true significance of life".<sup>1</sup>

It is of interest to note that in explaining the meaning of the key concept, namely karma for the present day Hinduism both S. Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo made the same affirmation that "man or man's self is greater than his karma". Nevertheless, on a close examination of all these statements of Sri Aurobindo one cannot fail to see the difference between his interpretation of karma and that of Radhakrishnan. Aurobindo's line of criticism of the popular understanding of "karma" is geared to the logical justification of the rejection of a great deal of what had surrounded the karma doctrine in classical Hinduism. This clearly reflects his profound rationalization and the boldness with which he tried to enlighten people's minds on the problem of "karma". This certainly commands one's intense admiration and respect for Aurobindo as one of the influential figures of contemporary Indian thought. Radhakrishnan, on the other hand, whose treatment of the same doctrine we have already alluded to by insisting on the idea of karma as "the law of necessity" or "a principle of continuity", seeks to show to the western world that karma is a metaphysically and epistemologically sound dogma of modern Hinduism. And yet at the same time in his positive approach to the doctrine Radhakrishnan displays some sign of being influenced by the western interpretation of human freedom.

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1. Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine Revised and enlarged ed. 2 Vols. (In 3) (Calcutta, 1939) II, p. 780.

From this we can draw the preliminary conclusion that Sri Aurobindo's deeper understanding of the design of all existence had perhaps given him an incentive to bridge the gulf between the ancient eternal truths, which, as he claimed, are contained in his Hindu religion and the foremost efforts of modern man. His achievement, at all events, lies in his laying of the foundation for a new understanding of man's higher levels of consciousness beyond intellect. Traditional Hinduism has laid down the four ends of man as follows: 1. The aesthetically beautiful expression of his desires and natural instincts (kama); 2. material prosperity (artha); 3. the ethically sound life (dharma); 4. and the spiritually free life (mokṣa). The first three are related to man's empirical life, while the fourth refers to his spiritual life. Against this background, Sri Aurobindo has tried to explain the destiny of man in a number of significant sayings. He says: "To fulfil God in life is man's manhood. He starts from the animal vitality and its activities, but a divine existence is his objective".<sup>1</sup> "The spiritual aspiration is innate in man; for he is, unlike the animal, aware of imperfection and limitation and feels there is something to be attained beyond what he now is ....., the aspiration to exceed himself is delivered and articulate within him; ....."<sup>2</sup> "Man is there to affirm himself in the universe ....., but also to evolve and finally to exceed himself: .....; he has to realize his individuality .....,

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1. The Life Divine I, p. 56.

2. Ibid. II, pp. 838-39.

an ultimate arrival at a free and wide harmony and luminousness of knowledge and will and feeling and action and character, is the evident intention of his nature; .....".<sup>1</sup>

A little further on he defines more precisely what 'man is there to affirm himself in the universe' really means: "What is suggested is nothing so revolutionary and astonishing, but only the capacity in the human mentality, when it has reached a certain level or a certain point of stress of evolutionary impetus, to press towards a higher plane of consciousness and its embodiment in the being".<sup>2</sup> The gist of all these statements is that human being is raised to a higher level. But how does this happen? To make this consummation possible three things are necessary, namely: "consciousness, plasticity, and unreserved surrender, the nature of each of which is beautifully described at pp. 75-77 of the book The Mother".<sup>3</sup> Aurobindo affirmed: "It is in his human nature, in all human nature, to exceed itself by conscious evolution, to climb beyond what he is".<sup>4</sup> On the basis of this statement J.N. Mohanty, author of Modern Philosophical Anthropology and the Concept of Man in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy (Bombay: 1956), observes that "the cardinal principle of this philosophy is the principle that man is what he can be; that human existence is full of possibilities; ..... This coincides with the findings of such re-

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1. The Life Divine I, pp. 593-4.

2. Ibid., p. 837.

3. S.K. Maitra, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, (Calcutta, 1941), p. 12.

4. The Life Divine II, p. 644.



searchers as Martin Heidegger: ....., human existence consists in its possibilities. Heidegger, however, is concerned with what may be called 'horizontal' possibility: the possibility of oscillating on the genuine dimension of existing. Sri Aurobindo supplements this phenomenological with a genetic evolutionary standpoint. Man has not only the possibilities of leading a more inwardized, more self-conscious (i.e. the existentialistic) life as contrasted with the externalized life of the sensational man; .....".<sup>1</sup> Incidentally, Dr. Mohanty does not explain what 'the possibility of oscillating on the genuine dimension of existing' in Heidegger's writings really means. To me, it probably means the Heideggerian concept of "ec-sistence" to express the historicity of Dasein. Being in history as a characteristic element of the existence of man points to the fact that in each "now" of decision man is responsible for the past and future.

For Aurobindo, "our imperfect mental instrumentation is not the last word of our possibilities; .....".<sup>2</sup> "But where then is the kingdom of their fulfilling? It comes to them by the exceeding of themselves".<sup>3</sup> The "possibility of man exceeding of himself" is a terminology peculiar to the philosopher steeped in the Hindu understanding of the ultimate end of man as the culmination and fulfilment of the individual - i.e. the

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1. J.N. Mohanty, "Integralism and Modern Philosophical Anthropology" in The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, eds. H. Chaudhuri and F. Spiegelberg, London, 1960), pp. 157-58.

2. The Life Divine II, p. 667.

3. The Life Divine I, p. 68.

general uplift of all the different spheres of existence, physical, vital and mental. In this sense it is a matter of different terminology rather than a matter of different connotation (note Aurobindo's insistence on the aspect of unreserved surrender of the self for the operation of the divine to bring about consummation of life) between Aurobindo's understanding of the consummation of one's life and Bultmann's concept of true freedom. Of course, Bultmann, as a Christian existentialist theologian uses the terms like "genuine life" or "authentic existence" possessed in the moment of decision for God. It is precisely here that the possibility of comparison between Aurobindo's anthropology and that of Bultmann is not too far to seek.

It may be said that Heidegger's analysis of philosophy of existence calls for a man's direct experience with things. Just as Heidegger's system plays down the importance of reasoning and inference in apprehending reality so also does Indian epistemology which Aurobindo represents underscore the objectification of reality. It is this ruling out of the over-emphasis and overestimation given to the objective thought which has no relation to the existing subject at which both Heidegger's thought and Aurobindo's thought most readily meet.<sup>1</sup> Further, there can be a comparison between Aurobindo's thought and Heidegger's phrase: through decision and by decision in the face of encounter. Macquarrie explains that "the philo-

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1. cf. F. Spielgelberg, "Sri Aurobindo and Existentialism" in The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, p. 52.

sophy of existence is not a speculative metaphysic but phenomenological self-analysis. 'It is not a speculation detached from man, but man himself, as he understands himself'".<sup>1</sup>

This brings us now to Sri Aurobindo's "integral yoga" which is his special contribution to contemporary Indian philosophy. For him, the actual insight into being can be termed as intuition (cp. Bergson's idea of intuition going beyond the pure reason). Elsewhere Aurobindo defined more fully the idea of "intuition" as follows: "Intuition has a fourfold power. A power of revelatory truth-seeing, a power of inspiration or truth-hearing, a power of truth-touch or immediate seizing of significance ....., a power of true and automatic discrimination of the orderly and exact relation of truth to truth, - these are fourfold potencies of Intuition".<sup>2</sup> He did not see the opposition of intuition to the conceptual fictions of pure Reason. "It [Intuitive experience] is valid only so far as it proceeds and it errs by stopping short of the integral experience".<sup>3</sup>

For Aurobindo the world is real and has significance. One important question is: How far did Aurobindo subscribe to the Vedantist's view of the universe, namely Brahma-vivarta-vada of Sankara? For Aurobindo, "Spirit is the soul and reality of that which we sense as Matter; Matter is a form and body of that which we realize as Spirit".<sup>4</sup>

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1. J. Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, p. 238.

2. The Life Divine. II, p. 1000.

3. Ibid.. I, p. 118.

4. Ibid.. I, p. 368.

He writes: "Māyā is one realization, an important one which Saṅkara overstressed, because it was most vivid to his own experience. For yourselves leave the word for subordinate use and fix rather on the idea of Līla<sup>1</sup> a deeper and more penetrating word than Māyā. Līla includes the idea of Māyā and exceeds it; nor has it that association of the vanity of all things useless to you who had elected to remain and play with Srikr̥ṣṇa in Madhura and Br̥ndavan". He adds: "All that is the play of His caitanya<sup>2</sup> in His infinite being, His manifestations, and therefore all are real ..... He is in no way limited by that which we see or think about Him. That is the Māyā from which we must escape, the Maya of ignorance which takes things as separately existent and not God, no caitanya,.....".<sup>3</sup>

This indicates that like a true follower of the Sākta philosophy, Aurobindo does not believe in Maya as understood by Saṅkara since for Aurobindo, "phenomenon is not phantasm; phenomenon is the substantial form of a Truth".<sup>4</sup> Hence, Prof. Charles A. Moore rightly remarks that "Aurobindo formulates a philosophy which eliminates that alleged negativism and illusionism of traditional Indian philosophy".<sup>5</sup>

The cardinal principle of Aurobindo's philosophy is that at the heart of things there is a Consciousness - Force and

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1. Play.

2. Consciousness.

3. As cited by P.T. Raju, Idealistic Thought of India, p. 300.

4. The Life Divine I, p. 49.

5. A Source Book in Indian Philosophy, eds. S. Radhakrishnan and C.A. Moore (Princeton: Bombay, 1957), p. 526.

therefore "all creation or becoming is nothing but this self-manifestation".<sup>1</sup> From the viewpoint of this statement it seems hard to resist the conclusion that "the descent of the Absolute into the finite, which would be inexplicable on the basis of Sankara's negativistic interpretation is necessitated in Aurobindo's view as the inevitable expression of the essential power of Brahman".<sup>2</sup>

One interesting feature of his system as contrasted with the traditional philosophical understanding of Reality is that for him "Becoming is the only being".<sup>3</sup> It is precisely in this sense that both Radhakrishnan and Aurobindo radically modified or even deliberately changed the age-long conception that the Absolute alone is real and that all else is neither real being nor non-being in the language of Sankara.

One other important question is: "How far did Aurobindo emphasize the Spirit as personal being? It is a commonplace to say that Aurobindo has probably been influenced by Bergson's Philosophy of Creative Evolution. There are some passages in Aurobindo's writings which suggest Bergson's influence on him although he never acknowledged this openly in any of his major works<sup>4</sup>. Aurobindo's statements like "Duration then, ....., is the sole absolute"<sup>5</sup> as compared with Bergson's idea of duration, probably calls attention to the fact that the concept of

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1. The Life Divine I, p. 169.

2. A Source Book in Indian Philosophy, eds. S. Radhakrishnan and C.A. Moore, p. 575.

3. The Life Divine I, p. 117.

4. See add. n. on the question of the influence of Bergson on Aurobindo.

5. The Life Divine I, p. 117.

Consciousness revealing itself in matter and life is the point at which both Aurobindo and Bergson most readily meet. In his book, The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy, Radhakrishnan devoted two chapters to Bergson's Absolute Idealism in which he pointed out that Bergson's idea of matter and life could be traced back to Consciousness and that all reality is spiritual. For Bergson the whole is spirit. Bergson's system is a spiritualistic monism. From this Radhakrishnan argued that Bergson's elan vital, as the metaphysical principle of reality and historical evolution, stood for the Absolute, the Eternal Spirit in its manifestation in the contingent<sup>1</sup>. It is perhaps in this sense also that one can discern a certain similarity between Aurobindo's system and that of Bergson. Just as Bergson's Spirit could hardly be taken as a personal being so also Aurobindo's eternal spirit was, in my opinion, far from being personal, divine being whose function it is to meet man as person with his transforming power.

It is of further interest to note that in Aurobindo's scheme there are two ideas intertwined, namely the idea of atmasamarpana - an absolute and unconditional surrender of the individual to God issuing in power of God to transform him; and that of self-realization. D.S. Sarma comments: "Aurobindo insists on this primary condition [ātmasmarpana] throughout. Man can achieve nothing by his own unaided effort. It is the power of God - the Divine. Sakti - coming down into the soul that can effect the transformation which is desired".<sup>2</sup> In

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1. cf. S. Radhakrishnan, The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy (London, 1920) pp. 159, 161-162.

2. D.S. Sarma, op. cit., pp. 338.



his reply to his critics who were disappointed at his retirement to a life of solitary quest Aurobindo made it clear that "to be ourselves liberated from ego and realize our true selves is the first necessity; all else can be achieved as a luminous result, .....".<sup>1</sup> And as for the light which a Yogin should seek, Sri Aurobindo gives the following caution in one of his letters: "One must see what is the nature of the light ....one must therefore be on one's guard and distinguish: the true discrimination has to come by the growth of the psychic feeling and a purified mind and experience".<sup>2</sup> Aurobindo writes: "There must be then a conscious self-direction of the mental being in us towards this change, this substitution of Supernature for the old nature, this transcendence".<sup>3</sup>

From all these statements it can be seen that however eloquently Aurobindo speaks of the unconditional surrender of the individual as a necessary condition for bringing down the power of God to transform him, his traditional Hindu idea of self-abnegation or psychic preparation still comes into clear focus.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine II, p. 512.

2. As quoted by D.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 340.

3. The Life Divine II, p. 969.

4. It is in view of this strand of thought in Aurobindo's system that one can raise an objection to the suggestion made by Dr. Robin Boyd in his assessment of the structure of Chenchiah's theology in connection with the influence of Bergson in both Aurobindo's philosophy and Chenchiah's own thought. Dr. Boyd observes "The aspects of thought which helped him /Chenchiah/ most were the idea of a spiritual power which comes from outside with a transforming strength and that of the evolution empowered by the descent from above ..... The influence of Bergson is to be

Another important theme in Aurobindo's system concerns his understanding of cosmic history. For him history has a definite direction and purpose. "The life of the individual must have the same rhythm of significance, the same law of progression as the cosmic life; its place in that rhythm cannot be a stray purposeless intervention, it must be an abiding instrumentation of the cosmic purpose". "In our present life of Nature, in our externalized surface existence, it is the world that seems to create us; but in the turn to the spiritual life it is we who must create ourselves and our world". "At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny; ....."<sup>2</sup>

H. Jai Sing points out that "through it and in it the eternal spirit seeks its self-realization ..... The crisis, however, is upon us when the veil that separates the human from the Supreme would be lifted .....".<sup>3</sup> One can immediately discern that Aurobindo's concept of history obviously reflects how close he comes to Hegelian Idealism according to which the

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seen here both in Aurobindo and in Chenchiah's own thought".<sup>1</sup> That is, both Chenchiah's and Boyd's understanding of Aurobindo's idea of transformation of the individual through spiritual power seem to stop short of his idea of self-realization. To put it bluntly, they both emphasized Aurobindo's idea of transforming spiritual power at the expense of his idea of the traditional concept of self-abnegation; but as a true believer in the power of Sakti Aurobindo emphasized equally the power of Brahman to transform the jiva.

1. R.H.S. Boyd, An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology, (Madras, 1969), p. 146.
2. The Life Divine II, pp. 708, 1108, 1159.
3. H. Jai Singh, Sri Aurobindo: His Life and Religious Thought (Bangalore, 1962), p. 37.

principle of differentiation and the wholeness of the Absolute are held together. Moreover, there is a combination of two ideas, namely history having a goal and a strong sense of crisis on the part of the individual. For Aurobindo realizes that any theory of the world which does not recognize the reality of history is of little use. His criticism of Sankara's view of the world is: it leaves part of our being "out in the cold to perish in the twilight of the unreal reality of maya".<sup>1</sup> In the sense of the second idea there is an interesting parallel between Aurobindo's understanding of history and that of Bultmann.

The concept of the 'gnostic' being and the community is the last theme of Aurobindo's system of ideas. His understanding of 'gnostic' being is more or less the same as the Upanishadic concept of "Jeevanmukta" or the liberated soul or the true yogin of the Gītā, which means that the self of the individual has been delivered, only Aurobindo used a different and a more comprehensive terminology to define more fully what the essential nature of a jñānin should be. For him, "the gnostic being will have indeed an inmost existence in which he is alone with God, one with the Eternal, self-plunged into the depths of the Infinite, ....."<sup>2</sup> "The liberated soul extends its perception of unity horizontally as well as vertically. Its unity with the transcendent One is incomplete without its unity with the cosmic Many". "The spiritual man has not stood back altogether from the life of the community; for the sense

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1. S.J. Samartha, The Hindu View of History, Classical and Modern, pp. 26-29, cited in History and Contemporary India, p. 78.

2. The Life Divine II, p. 1045.

of unity with all beings, the stress of a universal love and compassion, the will to spend the energies for the good of all creatures, are central to the dynamic overflowing of the spirit: .....". "The Buddhist elevation of universal compassion, karuṇā and sympathy (Vasudhaiva kutumbakam, the whole earth is my family), to the highest principle of action, the Christian emphasis on love indicate this dynamic side of the spiritual being".<sup>1</sup>

This is an admirably ingenious attempt by Aurobindo who has interpreted the nature of the 'gnostic' being in terms of the fundamental principle of life, i.e. in living for others the purpose of our life will be realized. It is in this sense that Aurobindo's contribution to the history of the liberated individual in the context of the community is highly significant when seen from the perspective of Indian society.

This survey of Aurobindo's thought brings to light the fact that in his system there are embedded existential elements, namely (i) like Radhakrishnan, Aurobindo maintains that "Becoming is the only being". This is a radical attack against the Advaita of Sankara. Aurobindo identifies the ultimate reality with becoming, which in turn means that the transcendent Being cannot be understood except in relation to existing human being. Just as Kierkegaard insists that "God, the absolutely Eternal, is to be grasped in the becoming of existence" so also does Aurobindo insist that being is none other than

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1. The Life Divine I, p. 62; II, p. 900 and fn.

becoming. (ii) Over against the fatalistic conception of karma Aurobindo emphatically defends the aspect of human freedom. For him, "our imperfect mental instrumentation is not the last word of our possibilities". Just as existentialists insist that man's being is a potentiality to be so also does Aurobindo insist that human existence consists in its possibilities. Authentic temporality takes place in the moment of decision. As we have noted, for him, "the possibility of man exceeding of himself" basically means the general uplift of all the different spheres of existence, physical, vital and mental. (iii) Just as existentialists insist that "history is a call to historicity" so also does Aurobindo insist that "in the turn to the spiritual world it is we who must create ourselves and the world". For him, the crisis is upon us. This means that by implying a strong sense of crisis on the part of the individual Aurobindo lays emphasis on 'personal history' rather than 'world history'.

#### The Ramakrishnan Movement --- Vivekananda

The founder of this movement was Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) whose original name was Gadadhar. From 1855 he was a priest at the Kali Temple at Dakshinesvar, six miles north-west of Calcutta. His spiritual career was marked by the most remarkable feature that he was not satisfied with any one system of religious discipline. He was an unwearied experimenter in religion. He therefore passed through Tāntric Sādhana (discipline), the various types of Vaishnava Sādhana, and Advaita Sādhana. His zest for spiritual adventures finally even led

him to go through spiritual disciplines outside Hinduism, namely Muslim and Christian experiences and he eventually formed his own concept of religion. He held the view that Reality manifests itself to mortal minds in various ways, and hence no one religion can claim to possess complete truth. His own words are: "I had to practise all religions once, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, and I have walked the paths of the different denominations of Hinduism again - ..... And I have found that it is the same God towards whom all are travelling, only they are coming through diverse ways".<sup>1</sup>

Another remarkable thing about his understanding of God is that he knew the joys of Samadhi as union with God, but he resisted the temptation to be lost in it. He cried out: "Oh mother, let me remain in contact with man; do not make me a dried up ascetic".<sup>2</sup> (Incidentally, it will be noted that for him the Absolute expressed in terms of the relative is termed as Divine Mother). Further, Sri Ramakrishna wholeheartedly supported the idea of world-affirmation. Sarma observes: "He disapproved of those who say that this world is a dark, miserable place or that it is a dense forest. He said that, on the contrary, to those who cling to God in weal and woe, it was a mansion of joy".<sup>3</sup> Against the idea of man as weak and miserable sinner he stoutly defended the idea of man's ability to pursue his

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1. As cited by D.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 247.

2. As cited in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 253.

3. D.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 251.



goal of realization. On the basis of these two ideas namely "world-affirmation", and "man capable of pursuing his goal" one can safely assume that his teaching also strikes a note of man's absolute freedom to reach his destined goal.

The germs of Neo-Vedantism<sup>1</sup> as well as its rationale and the beginnings of its practical application are to be found in the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna but its philosophical development is due to Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902). It was through Swami Vivekananda's leadership that the Ramakrishna movement became widely recognized. He was also acclaimed as the master exponent of the practical Vedantic Advaitism. While he attempted to persuade people to give due recognition to the ethical teaching of the Vedanta school he vigorously worked to present to the world the doctrine of "practical Vedanta". It was in the light of this that he was applauded at the parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893 as the reformer of Hindu faith and a champion of the cause of inter-religious understanding and unity. He never ceased to emphasize Sri Ramakrishna's two principal goals, first "to realize the Truth" and the second, "to help the world".<sup>2</sup> What he claimed to seek was: "A religion which will give us faith in ourselves, a national self-respect, and the power to feed and educate the poor and relieve the misery around us ..... If you want to find God, serve man."<sup>3</sup> "And as for the Theosophical Society,

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1. See add. note on Neo-Vedanta.

2. As quoted by M.M. Thomas, op. cit., p. 125.

3. Romain Rolland, Prophets of the New India, 237, cited by W. Stewart, op. cit., p. 55.

the Swami roundly declared that its "occultisms and esotericisms" would only make Indians, who were already weak and superstitious, weaker and more superstitious. "Give up these weakening mysticisms", .....<sup>1</sup> The rationalist in him made him speak out against ignorance and superstition, though sometimes he would explain them fatalistically by saying that such a low state of affairs was "India's Karma, her fate".<sup>2</sup>

However, one of the special merits of Vivekananda's religious thought is that he never ceases to emphasize the idea that without the impulse to be free there would be no progress in the world. He writes: "This idea of freedom you cannot relinquish. Your actions, your very lives will be lost without it. Every moment nature is proving us to be slaves, and not free. Yet, simultaneously rises the other idea, that still we are free. At every step we are knocked down as it were, by Maya, and shown that we are bound, and yet at the same moment, together with this blow, together with this feeling that we are bound, comes the other feeling that we are free. Some inner voice tells us that we are free".<sup>3</sup> For Vivekananda, "In all yogas renunciation is necessary. This is, ....., the real heart of all spiritual culture-renunciation. This is reli-

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1. As cited by D.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 295.

2. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vols. I-VIII (Mayavati, 1956-1960) V, p. 190, cited by B.G. Gokhale, "Swami Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism", The Journal of Bible and Religion Vol. XXXII (1964), p. 39.

3. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda II, 9th ed. (Calcutta, 1958), p. 125., cited in Swami Vivekananda Memorial Volume, p. 296.

gion - renunciation".<sup>1</sup>

This statement of Vivekananda suggests that for him, as Sarma observes "religious regeneration of the land through renunciation and service".<sup>2</sup> This, conversely, anticipates the regeneration of the individual which is renunciation for Vivekananda. This implies that in Vivekananda also the idea of regeneration occurs with particular urgency as it does in Tagore and Gandhi.

Speaking of religion he said: "..... Religion is not in doctrine or dogmas, nor in intellectual argumentations. It is being and becoming. It is realization".<sup>3</sup> If Vivekananda had subscribed to the traditional understanding of Brahman as formless as in the Advaita of Sankara, that could be termed as the negative movement of his thought. But that is not the whole story. In Vivekananda's understanding of the Vedanta there are two movements of thought, a negative and a positive. To understand Brahman, he says: "We have to go through the negation; and then the positive will begin ....."<sup>4</sup> Also, according to the positive movement of thought, the world is not unreal for him as it is in Sankara's theory of the world.

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1. What Religion IS in the words of Swami Vivekananda, ed. John Yale (London, 1962), p. 177.

2. D.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 284.

3. As cited in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 257.

4. Swami Vivekananda, Jnana Yoga, p. 173 (The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda II, 9th ed. (Calcutta, 1958), pp. 57-288).

According to Sankara Brahman alone is real and the world is false or illusory (brahma satyam, jaganmithya). In short, for Vivekananda, the world of objects is not totally negated in Brahman, but in a sense the world also is real. That is, he subscribes to the view of affirming the world in God. He points out that what the Vedanta teaches is not that we should denounce the world but deify it. The Swami says: "Deify it (the world); it is God alone"; and he cites the opening verse of the Isopanishad which says: "whatever exists in this universe, is to be covered with the Lord". He goes on further and says: "..... The whole world is full of the Lord. Open your eyes and see Him. This is what Vedanta teaches".<sup>1</sup>

In his philosophy of the Neo-Vedanta he combines jnana, karma, bhakti and yoga. What he wants is a religion that will equally be acceptable to all minds and must be equally conducive to action. Further, the traditional view of self-realization through self-abnegation or renunciation has been understood by the Swami from a different angle. As he repeatedly says "the Order of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission is to serve a double purpose - Salvation of one's own self and good of the world".<sup>2</sup> From this point of view he interprets the Upanishadic teaching in this way: The Upanishad declares - "May your mother be God to you; may your father be an object of worship to you; may your preceptor be an object of adoration

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1. Swami Vivekananda, Jnana Yoga, pp. 140-141.

2. The Complete Works of Vivekananda VI, 6th Ed. (Calcutta, 1956), p. 504, cited in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 322.

to you". To this he adds: "May the suffering millions be the object of worship to you; may the illiterate mass be the object of reverential service to you".<sup>1</sup> All this indicates that the Swami saw clearly that selflessness is the life and soul of all kinds of service.

Vivekananda affirms: "Buddhism says to men: 'Realize that all this is illusion', while Advaita Vedanta says: 'Realize that in illusion is the Real'".<sup>2</sup> This statement reflects the claim he makes about the Vedanta. This is how he interprets it and this interpretation is, in fact, a rather outright breaking out of Sankara's understanding of the world and of the relation of the ultimate reality to it. The expression "Realize that in illusion is the Real" obviously reflects his intense interest to relate the Absolute who is thought to be immutable to the reality of the world. This implies that over against the Advaita of Sankara he tries to establish an essential connection between the realms of appearance and reality, between the possible and the actual. This is perhaps a striking example of an existential element in contemporary Indian thinking. This obviously shows that Vivekananda unmistakably pointed to the growing tendency towards existentialism as the eastern corollary and counterpart of the western existentialism associated with Kierkegaard, M. Heidegger, Jaspers, and so on. Swami Saradananda has therefore no hesitation in summing up Vivekananda's philosophy of history thus: "Truth

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1. The Complete Works of Vivekananda VI, 6th ed. (Calcutta, 1956) p. 288, cited in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 323.

2. Conversation with Sister Nivedita in London, cited by V.S. Naravane, op. cit., p. 93.

does not pay homage to any society ancient or modern, society has to pay homage to it or die".<sup>1</sup> In this statement one can detect Vivekananda's attempt to establish an intelligible connection between the eternal and the temporal, between noumenon and phenomenon as a deliberate and challenging denial of Sankara's idealistic scheme.

Furthermore, "Of the Swami's numerous triumphs, say his biographers, "One of the greatest was the conversation of his Gurubhāis [ his brother monks ] from the individualistic to the national idea of religious life, in which public spirit and service to fellow-men occupied a prominent place".<sup>2</sup> One cannot fail to be impressed by the fact that Vivekananda was not satisfied with the individualistic salvation of classical Hinduism. His understanding of one's religious experience is not a flight into a fantasy of individualism, but to serve one's fellow-men is for him the all-consuming purpose of life. This indicates that the idea of the individual as reaching the fulfilment of his personality in the service of the community is certainly far more movingly portrayed in Vivekananda's writings than in any contemporary Hindu writer's work.

This study of Vivekananda's religious thought shows that there are some existential elements implied in his system. For instance, (i) however eloquently he speaks of the Vedanta as a strength-giving religion he breaks out of the full-fledged idealistic scheme of Sankara by emphasizing the fact that

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1. As cited in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 344.

2. As quoted by D.S. Sarma, op. cit., p. 284.



Reality cannot be understood except in relation to the relative reality of the world. For Kierkegaard contemporaneity with the eternal has various aspects, the most important of which is that the eternal is related to the historical. Just as existentialists insist that the ontological being has no reality except in the existence of men so also does Vivekananda ~~insist that the~~ ultimate being cannot be understood apart from the historical. (ii) Over against the fatality of karma he emphasizes the aspect of human freedom. He contends that "we make the thread out of our own substance and spin the cocoon ...".<sup>1</sup> This means that he stresses man's freedom which is indeed a remarkable insight of his into the philosophy of life when seen from the perspective of inexorable fate at whose mercy man was thought to be. (iii) For existentialists the historical decisions of individuals make up history. Gogarten explains that "these decisions are such that they do not reach beyond history in order to secure criteria and standards from a super-reality about it".<sup>2</sup> Just as existentialists insist on the play of the contingent so also does Vivekananda insist that "Truth does not pay homage to any society ancient or modern, society has to pay homage to it or die". This language is peculiar to the Hindu theologian for whom the uplifting of society is an important issue. This means that Vivekananda is interpreting the meaning of history in terms of society and for him, the meaning of history lies

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1. As quoted in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 257.

2. F. Gogarten, "Theology and History", Journal for Theology and the Church, Vol. Four (1967), p. 38.

not so much in universal history as in the free acts of the individuals as he insists that "society has to pay homage to Truth or die".

In our inquiry into "Existential elements" in recent Indian thinking we have concentrated on bringing to the fore how modern Hindu theologians restated some of the main propositions of classical Hinduism from their viewpoint of Western philosophy and culture and the felt need of the modern world. In their restatement of Hindu beliefs they were prepared even to alter the structural presuppositions of the Vedanta system in the light of their new understanding of the age-long and cardinal concepts of Hinduism such as karma, Maya, transcendence, and self-realization. That is, they encouraged an abandonment of karma as a fatalistic principle and subordinated it to the category of the freedom of the will. In their interpretation of maya they emphasized the reality of the world, thereby according meaning to history, and eventually developed their own philosophy of history.

Further, they reinterpreted the age-long concept of self-realization in terms of the regeneration and renunciation of the individual. This idea of self-renunciation gained a new meaning over against the traditional concept of self-realization which entailed an idea of salvation which was wholly individualistic. It was against this individualistic salvation that these Neo-Vedantic thinkers revolted and consequently emphasized the idea of the liberated individual's place in the context of the community. Moreover, their understanding of transcendence was no longer within the circle of the accepted

categories of the idealistic scheme of Sankara but was greatly developed under the theistic influence - namely, they were no longer interested in the pure being of Brahman and apart from humanity they could no longer postulate it as it is in itself. They endeavoured to establish an intelligible connection between the eternal and the temporal.

All these new trends in the thought of the religio-philosophical thinkers of renascent Hinduism may well suggest that certain parallels can be drawn between their concepts of human freedom, transcendence, regeneration of the self and history and of the kind of thinking which Bultmann in the Christian tradition represents, a fuller treatment of these parallels will be the subject of the next chapter.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. Add. note on the Baùls: The word Baùl means madcap, from bayu (Skt. Vayu) in the sense of nerve current and has become the appellation of a set of people who do not conform to established social usage. They look down upon those who have less creativity. This can be seen from one of their poems:

".....  
.....  
.....

Pursuers of the path of man's own handiwork,  
Who follow the crowd, gleaning their false leavings,  
What news can they get of the Real?".

"It is hardly to be wondered at that people who think thus should have no use for history !".<sup>1</sup> Their ideas about pilgrimage come into clear focus in a song, the last line of which runs thus: "At every step I have my Mecca and Khasi; sacred is every moment",<sup>2</sup> --- Mecca and Khasi are the most sacred places of pilgrimage for Muslims and Hindus respectively. The followers of the Sahaj cult, another name for the Bāṁls, believe only in living religious experience. "Our sahaj (simple, natural) religion is timeless, it has neither beginning nor end, it is of all time". They held that "Truth has two aspects, inert and living. Confined to itself truth has no value for man. It becomes priceless when embodied in a living personality".<sup>3</sup>

2. Add. note on Classical Vedanta and Neo-Vedanta: The founder of classical Vedanta was Sankara (788-828), a Brahmin from Kerala in South India. He was an advaitavadin (non-dualist), i.e. a preacher of absolute monism. Of the ten monasteries he founded on the Buddha's model four still survive. It is generally acknowledged that his philosophic profundity and genius of explanations of the Upanishadic texts made him the greatest of all expositors of classical Hinduism. It is probably correct to say that even though Ramanaja's interpretation of the Vedanta-Sutras (Badarayana's systematization of Upanishadic thought) was considered to be more in line with

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1. The Religion of Man, p. 214.

2. Ibid., p. 215.

3. Ibid., p. 215.

their general purport than that of Sankara, yet Sankara represented the main thought of the Upanishads more correctly.

Sankara developed his own critical theory of the distinction between the para-vidya (transcendent) and apara-vidya (phenomenological) knowledge - the vyavahara - satya (the conventional truth) and the paramarthikasatya (absolute truth). But essential to Sankara's position are two propositions, namely the belief that real truth is unstatable and the doctrine of super-imposition implied in the popular view, e.g. when, to quote the stock example, a piece of 'mother-of-pearl is mistaken for silver'. That Sankara's vyavaharika views are realistic and that he admits degrees of reality, or unreality, in the objects of dream experiences, the normal world and illusions, respectively, - all experiences have objects real in respective degrees - is a well-known concept of his theory of knowledge of Brahman, the ultimate reality.

One important question is whether the Advaita notion, i.e. the relation of Brahman - atman is not really implicit in the whole subsequent literature. To put it differently, what is the relation of the Advaita notion to the sectarian faiths? In general we may remark that as a matter of fact, the post-Sankara period is marked by resurgences and new developments of Vaishnavism and Saivism represented respectively by the Krishna-bhakti of the Gīta-Govinda, Viṭhoba and the Chaitanya school in the north-east and the following of Basava, and other important movements in the south. This is evidenced by the fact that Tagore explained the nature of

the ultimate being in personal categories. "Limitation of the Unlimited", he writes, is personality": God is personal where he creates. This kind of thinking is a sign of moving away from Classical Vedanta which can be termed as Neo-Vedanta.

Another important aspect of Classical Vedanta concerns the concept of karma. The word karma literally means 'a deed'. The traditional Hindu belief is that what one does in this life determines one's destiny not only in respect of one future life but also in respect of the next in a chain of future lives. This is still the background of much popular and semi-educated thought. But the origin of this doctrine goes back even to the Vedic period. Keith notes that the Vedic technical term Ishtapurta may be regarded as a distinct precursor of the later theory of karma.<sup>1</sup> It is also possible to hold as in the case of 'dharma' that the theory of the Rta may also have been an anticipation of the law of karma.<sup>2</sup>

Rta understood as dharma appeared in social life as the continuation, the consequence and reflection of the cosmic binding order. The earliest twin theory of karma and rebirth can be found in the Satapatha Brahmana wherein it is said: "Every man is born in the world fashioned by himself", VI, 2,2,27. The Chandogya Up. takes this a stage further: "Just as he acts, just as he behaves, so will he be born .....", Chandogya Up. III, 14, 1. So in classical Hinduism too, karma is regarded as the stern administrator of retribution.

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1. cf. A.B. Keith, Religion and Philosophy of the Veda (Cambridge (Mass), 1925) I, p. 250; II, p. 478.

2. cf. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy I, p. 109, and G.H. Mees, Dharma and Society (The Hague, 1935), p. 10.



As is well known, the most important thinkers of classical Vedanta were wrestling with the problem of the relation of the ultimate reality to the world. Brahman was thought to be one abiding principle behind all phenomena of the universe. According to the Upanishadic teaching Brahman is the Absolute, Chandogya Up. VI, 2, 1: Taittiriya Up. II, 7.

Brahman ..... stands at the limit of the intellect, just beyond it (cp. the wonderful description of the Puruṣa in Muṇḍaka Up. II, 1, 2). The theologians of classical Vedanta tried to define the nature of the Absolute taking their stand on the Upanishads. Consequently there emerged two types of definitions of the nature of the ultimate being, namely Nirguṇa Brahman and Saguṇa Brahman. Brahman was called Nirguṇa when it was considered to be the unattainable goal towards which the finite intellect strives, while it was called Saguṇa when it was thought to have attributes descriptive of its essential nature and so conceived of as a personal being.

Recent Hindu theologians did not seem content with the thought-forms of classical Vedanta, more specifically, with Sankara's definition of Brahman according to which the Supreme being is devoid of all qualities and distinctions (nirguṇa and nirviśeṣa). The theologians of Neo-Vedanta exemplify a kind of thinking which can be called a synthetic Vedanta which reconciles dualism and non-dualism and may be called concrete monism in so far as it holds that Brahman is both qualified and without quality; it has forms and is also formless. As a movement the Neo-Vedanta provided the Hindu intellectual

sufficient justification to remain a Hindu, although he was not unwilling to admit that there are valuable ethical teachings in Christianity not found in Hinduism.

Another important feature of Neo-Vedanta is that the law of karma is no longer thought to be the law of moral causation essentially representing the cosmic power. Over against the deterministic aspect of the concept of karma modern Hindu writers imply that what we can be in the next life depends on what we make of this. For instance, Prof. R.N. Dandekar in reply to an objection to the doctrine of karma as being determinative of one's present, points out that "our past deeds also produce indirect results in the form of innate tendencies which prompt us to act one way or another. It is necessary to emphasize that these innate tendencies prompt but do not compel us to act in a particular manner, thus affording ample scope for initiative and self-determination on the part of the individual".<sup>1</sup> This reflects the shift of emphasis in modern Hindu theology from the mechanical concept of karma to the aspect of human freedom.

3. Add. note on Gandhi's idea of Satyāgraha: Etymologically the word Satyāgraha means persistence in truth (from satya "truth" and āgraha "holding onto, grasping"). This persistence is understood to have a peculiar power, hence Satyāgraha is said to be Truth-force. Gandhi writes: "Satyāgraha is literally holding on to Truth, and it means, therefore, Truth-

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1. R.N. Dandekar, "The role of man in Hinduism" in The Basic Beliefs of Hinduism, ed. K.W. Morgan (Calcutta, 1955), p. 127.

force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known as soul-force. It excludes the use of violence because man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth and, therefore, not competent to punish. The word was coined in South Africa to distinguish the non-violent resistance of the Indians of South Africa from the contemporary 'passive resistance' of the suffragettes and others. It is not conceived as a weapon of the weak".<sup>1</sup> Gandhi further tells us that Truth is not only God but is also Love. Satyāgraha is the force of love and not of hatred. It must express love and vindicate truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one's self.

4. Add. note on the question of the influence of Bergson on Aurobindo: Aurobindo held that "we must judge of existence not by what we mentally conceive, but by what we see to exist. And the purest, free form of insight into existence as it is shows us nothing but movement. "Two things alone exist, movement in Space, movement in Time,....., Space and Time are real ..... We are and the world is a movement that continually progresses and increases by the inclusion of all the successions of the past in a present which represents itself to us as the beginning of all the successions of the future, - a beginning, a present that always eludes us because it is not, for it has perished before it is born..."<sup>2</sup> "Indivisible in the totality of the movement. Each movement of Time or Con-

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1. As cited by P.T. Raju, Idealistic Thought of India, p. 293.

2. The Life Divine I, pp. 116-117.

sciousness may be considered as separate from its predecessor and successor, .....; but this does not abrogate continuity without which there would be no duration of Time or coherence of consciousness. A man's steps as he walks or runs or leaps are separate, but there is something that takes the steps and makes the movement continuous".<sup>1</sup> "Duration then, ..... is the sole absolute".<sup>2</sup> We can compare this to Bergson's idea of the 'elan vital', according to which the whole is a flux. The universe endures. For him, "duration ....., is the very substance of the world in which we live".<sup>3</sup> From the point of view of these statements of Aurobindo it is possible to argue that he may have been influenced by Bergson's book, Creative Evolution. However, we can hardly find a direct reference in his major works to such influence.

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1. The Life Divine I, p. 117 fn.

2. Ibid., p. 117.

3. H. Bergson, Creative Evolution, tr. A Mitchell (London, 1911), p. 41.

### CHAPTER III

#### A comparison and a critique of the anthropology of Bultmann and modern Indian thought.

The conceptual framework of anthropology in modern Hindu thinkers was sketched in the preceding chapter in such a way as to bring out points of comparison and to a lesser extent, of contrast with that of Bultmann. In that chapter we attempted to show that the mainspring of their concern (modern Hindu theologians') was to expound the ancient teachings of their religion in their relevance to the present age. That is to say in the efforts of these recent Hindu apologists the focus of attention was shifted to the philosophy of history as over against the age-long view of a cyclic movement of time, to self-understanding in terms of regeneration and renunciation as substituting for the traditional concept of self-realization, to Brahman as humanized and the concept of human freedom as replacing the age-long conception of karma as the fatalistic principle of life.

It is our purpose in this chapter to make a brief excursion into the system of ideas of each of them, namely Tagore, S. Radhakrishnan, Gandhi, Aurobindo Ghosh and Swami Vivekananda to draw out more fully the lines of comparison between their anthropology and that of Bultmann. That is, in this project we shall attempt to investigate the question whether some aspects of Bultmann's anthropology may be said to have been foreshadowed in the framework of these neo-Vedantic thinkers

and also make a critical estimate of the anthropology of these two schools of thought.

It is perhaps not too much to say that these men show a growing alienation from the past, especially from Sankara's idealistic scheme of thinking. To put it differently the nature of God, God in his significance for the individual, or better yet, for humanity has become crucially significant for the frame of reference of renascent Hinduism which acknowledges human experience as the means of revelation. Bultmann's theology is, of course, characterized by a profound phenomenological analysis of Christian faith in that the individual must recognize his self-responsibility either to gain or lose his own authentic existence. He points out that philosophical instruction can clarify the meaning of human existence and can lead the hearer to a mode of self-reflection in which he is faced with the question of his authentic existence.<sup>1</sup>

What he contends is that in traditional theology the necessity of a personal "choice" has been obscured, and he is therefore at great pains to remove all false securities on which faith may like to rely. He vehemently advocates the necessity of costly faith and commitment. He further argues that God is not revealed through events without a personal response and Christian faith must arise out of the depths of a person's own existence. There is no knowledge of God without existential relevance for that person. Revelation for Bultmann, is not

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1. cf. Rudolf Bultmann, "Echte und Säkularisierte Verkündigung im 20. Jahrhundert, 1955" in Glauben und Verstehen III cited as (G.V.III) (Tübingen, 1962), p. 122 as tr. in E.J. Long, Jaspers and Bultmann: A dialogue between Philosophy and Theology in Existentialist Tradition (Durham (North Carolina), 1968), p. 102.



simply the communication of objective knowledge but consists of faith "in an occurrence in Jesus Christ, who died and was raised for us".<sup>1</sup> "Revelation is an occurrence that puts me in a new situation as a self, ...".<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere he expresses more succinctly the meaning of encounter explaining his 'kerygmatic theology' : "Entering into decisive encounters I may achieve a totally new self-understanding as a result of the love which is bestowed upon me, ....."<sup>3</sup>

All this Bultmann is anxious to assert in keeping with his view of the transcendent dimension reflected in his dialectical theology (God himself remains entirely hidden in his word of revelation while man is revealed to himself in the event) or "germs of revelation theology" in the words of Gogarten (D. Cairns qualifies this phrase by saying "what is here described is not a continuity between God and man, but a continued gracious approach of God to man").<sup>4</sup> All this evidently stems from his being influenced by Kierkegaard's principle of a qualitative difference between infinite and finite. Bultmann's understanding of history may be said to imply the idea that the truest objectivity is attained not through pretentious neutrality but through the most "agitated" and "concerned" involvement. The following statement will make his point of view of history clear: "We do not stand outside historical forces

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1. Existence and Faith, p. 74.

2. Ibid., p. 59.

3. Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 75.

4. D. Cairns, God Up There? (Edinburgh, 1967), p. 42 fn.

as neutral observers; we are ourselves moved by them;..... History, however, does not speak when a man stops his ears, that is, when he assumes neutrality, but speaks only when he comes seeking answers to questions which agitate him".<sup>1</sup> With these introductory remarks regarding Bultmann's theology let us now go on to institute a comparison, if we can, between the anthropology of modern Indian thought and that of Bultmann.

#### A. Comparison of Tagore's anthropology with that of Bultmann:

In the foregoing chapter we have described Tagore's understanding of man in some detail. For our present consideration, we select two salient passages. "Every true freedom that we may attain in any direction broadens our path of self-realization, which is in superseding the self. .... This implies a history of constant regeneration, a series of fresh beginnings and continual changes to the old .....".<sup>2</sup> "The "I am" in me crosses its finitude whenever it deeply realizes itself in the "Thou art" ..... "And thus life, which is an incessant explosion of freedom, finds its metre in a continued falling back in death. Every day is a death, every moment even ....., because directly a poem is fashioned, it is eternally freed from its genesis, it minimizes its history and emphasizes its independence". "I believe that the vision of Paradise is to be seen ....., in the beauty of the human face and the wealth of human life, .....".<sup>3</sup>

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1. Jesus and The Word, p. 4.

2. Tagore, The Religion of Man, pp. 55-56.

3. Contemporary Indian Philosophy, pp. 36, 38, 43, and 45.

These statements amply manifest Tagore's view of 'authentic' life as being basically dependent on human freedom to take decisions in one's historic existence. This obviously leads us to make a careful consideration of some of Bultmann's statements. He observes: "Philosophical analysis shows what existence in the abstract means. By contrast, existential, personal self-understanding does not say what existence means in the abstract, but points to my life as a concrete person in the here and now". "I understand myself ....., in my concrete encounters".<sup>1</sup> For him, man's new understanding of himself is one which arises only in the encounters which question him and demand his decision.<sup>2</sup> Bultmann elsewhere explains that "man's unity, therefore, is not a unity of substance, nor does it consist in the context of a psychologically comprehensible mental process, ..... It must rather be seen as historical; that is, as unity which is given through man's being claimed by a Thou".<sup>3</sup> What Bultmann so stoutly argues is that the questionableness of man is the structure of human existence - man called in question, and thus he can only answer with himself. The above statements of Bultmann make it clear that his understanding of man is characterized by certain categories, namely "the experience of the whole man", "involvement" and "existential encounter". The other pronounced aspect of Bultmann's thought is that he attempts, as

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1. Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 74 and Kerygma and Myth I, p. 203.

2. cf. Essays, p. 155.

3. Faith and Understanding I, p. 163.

his teacher W. Hermann did, "to comprehend human being as 'being-in-history'".<sup>1</sup> He also affirms that "man's being is not thought of as a phenomenon of nature, .....; it is achieved in his response to God's claim on him, and therefore in his action".<sup>2</sup>

When we consider these foregoing passages from Bultmann's works in comparison with those of Tagore as shown above, one can hardly fail to see some common words like freedom, true freedom (authentic life), decisions, moment, 'I' confronted by 'Thou', and so on occurring in their writings and reflecting almost the same content of meaning in their thought-forms, except that Bultmann describes man's true being as issuing from God's gracious act in Christ. Moreover, the traditional Hindu concept of self-realization gains a new meaning in Tagore's thought in that it is understood in terms of superseding the self, a history of constant regeneration, a series of fresh beginnings and continual changes to the old. This perhaps comes close to Bultmann's concept of self-understanding which he describes as follows: "This personal self-understanding is put to the test, is called into question (ist in Frage gestellt) in every situation of encounter".

"Now it should be clear that I cannot possess this self-understanding as a timeless truth, a conviction accepted once and for all. For my new self-understanding, by its very nature, must be renewed day by day, so that I understand the impera-

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1. Essays, p. 260.

2. Faith and Understanding I, p. 163.

tive self which is included in it".<sup>1</sup> Tagore's expressions like 'a series of fresh beginnings and continual changes to the old' probably imply that his idea of regeneration is not something possessed once for all and in his view it is to be obtained continuously since for him "every day is a death, every moment even .....". It is precisely in this sense that there is a point of resemblance between Tagore's idea of regeneration and Bultmann's concept of self-understanding.

Another interesting parallel between these two views can be drawn. Tagore makes practically no mention of divine operation in bringing man to decide for God. He lays a consistent emphasis on the idea that the achieving of one's authentic life depends basically upon his historical decisions. Bultmann also puts so little emphasis on divine operation, i.e. there is no objective revelation of God to man and he needs no props of objectivity to decide for the Creator. This should not blind us to the fact that Bultmann constantly insists on the act of God, i.e. God's prevenient deed of grace in the Christ-event. But it is possible to argue that man does need God's operation to awaken his faculties to make an act of obedient self-commitment to God. This point of view is denied by Bultmann, and in this sense he plays down the role of divine operation. And it is probably correct to say that this playing down of divine operation in his scheme of thinking is a counterpart to his rigid separation between history and eschatology. This even makes him deny the possi-

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1. Jesus Christ and Mythology, pp. 74, 75-6.

bility of history having an eschatological goal. For Bultmann, "God's future is the realization of human life".<sup>1</sup> For him, "eschatology has wholly lost its sense as goal of history, and is in fact understood as the goal of the individual human being".<sup>2</sup>

When we look at these statements of Bultmann and the foregoing statements of Tagore we must affirm that there is much in common that rings true to anthropology. And this is certainly highly instructive when religion is understood from the point of view of anthropology. But one wonders whether they give due attention to the fact that in religious experience one becomes conscious of the fact that God possesses his soul far more than one is able to cling to God and to the belief that commerce between the divine spirit and the human spirit is at least possible, as Paul conceives of it - a reciprocal activity of these two distinctive spirits. There is a notable portrayal of this important truth in Dr. Billistone's affirmation which is vivid in its imagery and entirely apposite of the Pauline perspective-- the interplay of the divine operation and human response to it: "The Spirit brings power from on high to build up spiritual strength out of the very weakness and infirmity of human instruments ....., for it actually strengthens and invigorates men with divine energies just as the agencies of the natural order revive the

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, "The Christian Hope and the Problem of Demythologizing-continued", The Expos. Times, Volume The Sixty-Fifth (1953-'54), p. 278.

2. Rudolf Bultmann, "History and Eschatology in the New Testament", N.T.S., Vol.I (1954-'55), p. 13.



flagging energies of their physical life".<sup>1</sup> It is true that they both make a most forcible appeal to human freedom, "human decisions on the level of existence". But there hardly seems any reason why the personal 'I' be not related to the call of a personal character from One who stands not only in a quite singular relation to me but also closer to me than any other being.

In the preceding chapter we have dealt to some extent with Tagore's concept of history and made it clear that the conceptual framework of the key concept called Maya as in Sankara's system is not wholly acceptable to him. He speaks of Maya as the process by which the finite is woven by the Supreme person, just as an artist weaves the art-product out of his imagination.<sup>2</sup> He holds that it is the drawing or painting that is of value for us and not the canvas on which it is done. For Tagore, the distinction between history and the cosmic process precisely consists in "a change of rhythm" and this means that Tagore chiefly adverts to the idea of drawing or painting on the canvas.

We must now go on to look more closely at some of Bultmann's statements reflecting his concept of history. It is axiomatic for Bultmann that history as a whole is to be grasped as my history. He observes: "Genuine historical knowledge demands a very personal aliveness of the understanding subject,

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1. F.W. Dillistone, The Holy Spirit in the Life of Today (London: Edinburgh, 1946), p. 64.

2. cf. Tagore, The Religion of Man, p. 141.

the very rich unfolding of his individuality", a little further on, he quotes with approval R.G. Collingwood's famous statement: "History is thus the self-knowledge of the living mind".<sup>1</sup> Later on he affirms: "Of course, to ask for meaning in history is not allowable if one is asking for meaning in the sense of goal. The meaning in history is immanent in history, because history is the history of mind". "And, furthermore, it must be said that historicity in its full sense is not self-evident natural quality of the human individual, but a possibility which must be grasped and realized. The man who lives without self-knowledge and without consciousness of his responsibility is a historical being in a much lower degree, ..... Genuine historicity means to live in responsibility and history is a call to historicity".<sup>2</sup>

All this goes to show that Tagore and Bultmann both emphasize the idea of the "person's dialogue ~~with~~ history". The last statement of Bultmann does indeed, strike a note of resemblance between his understanding of history and that of Tagore, particularly in view of the latter's attaching importance to the drawing or painting of the individual on the canvas of the world scene. And a striking parallel with Bultmann's thought becomes apparent when we compare Tagore's emphasis on "a change of rhythm" with Bultmann's view of history, i.e. 'genuine historicity means to live in responsibility and history is a call to historicity'. However, it may be profitable

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1. History and Eschatology p. 122.

2. Ibid., pp. 135, 136.

to point out here that as an academic existentialist theologian Bultmann takes account of the historicism of the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce, and the existential understanding of history found in Dilthey, Heidegger and so on. Whereas Tagore develops his own concept of history over against classical Hindu understanding of the cyclic movement of time, and Sankara's doctrine of Maya and his theory of the world. This means by implication that Tagore's concept of history does not go beyond the circle of the Indian schools of thought. Nonetheless, the most striking feature in both writers is that they both emphasize 'the historicity of history'.

These views suggest that what has happened is that the distinction between history and eschatology is dissolved to the extent that they become identified. In passing, it must be observed that in Tagore's system there is very little importance given to the idea of God fulfilling his purpose in history, which is understandable from the viewpoint of his religious background. The idea of eschatology does not govern Tagore's thought any more than it governs Bultmann's. If this position is pushed to its logical conclusions, we are left with no other alternative except to say that the infinite, the indispensable element of history has no part to play. And thereby we fall into the trap of a deistic position according to which God is utterly remote from nature and man. The point which I chiefly advert to is that man is essentially a created responsive being, answerable to God's demands on him (a position Bultmann so stoutly upholds), and in pursuit

of this position we may perhaps go even further to hold that the transcendent reality is thought to be winning man over to responsive love without impinging on his freedom. Only thus can we establish a relation between a transcendent world and the world of human history. (Incidentally, Bultmann speaks of God in analogical terms and we shall deal at some length with it later on in our discussion of his conception of the kerygmatic message). This position of mine is perhaps better expressed in Jürgen Moltmann's learned and suggestive book, Theology of Hope, wherein he says: "Without a cosmic eschatology there can be no assertion of an eschatological existence of man ..... The very mode of our experience of the world is not adiaphorous. On the contrary, world-picture and faith are inseparable - precisely because faith cannot suffer the world to become a picture of God nor a picture of man".<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, there is another dimension of the God-man relationship. If we recognize that God is the creator of the world (incidentally, as a theist, Tagore affirms that out of love God created the world), i.e. the world is the sphere of the rule and providence of God, we may probably take the further step of saying that the world can still be the "theatre of God's glory" as order, progress and beauty can be seen as reflection of divine glory (a position with which the poet Tagore would be in fullest agreement). It is for this reason that history as a whole cannot be reduced to 'my 'personal

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1. Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, tr. J.W. Leitch (London, 1967), p. 69.

history'.

B. Comparison of Radhakrishnan's anthropology with that of Bultmann:

We have shown in some detail in the section on Radhakrishnan how he vehemently argues for mystical experience culminating in the integral experience of the individual. He not only advocates the idea that integral experience is the sole and sure means of spiritual freedom but also assumes that all those who have attained a 'genuineness of life' irrespective of their confessional faiths would have obviously passed through the same mystical experience. And on the same score, he interprets Paul's conversion experience on the Damascus road in terms of mystical vision - an experience of self-awareness derived from introspection. His own words are: "For Paul, Jesus is only the Lord and not God ..... If the name of Jesus is employed, it is only in a symbolic way, ..... He certainly warns us against over-estimating the historical instead of looking upon it as the symbol of metaphysical truth ..... The foundation of St. Paul's Christianity is a vision, not an external revelation".<sup>1</sup>

Whatever may be the worth of this statement, an objection can be raised against his contention that the foundation of Paul's Christian faith is a vision of God in the mystical sense of the term. His explanation of Paul's conversion experience as arising merely out of mystical vision would seem to be a per-

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1. Eastern Religions and Western Thought, pp. 220-21.

sonal interpretation of an incident which for Paul was a dramatic spiritual experience of divine intervention in his life. One cannot simply refuse to recognize the fact that Paul's deepest insight into the divine purpose for his life and the divine intervention in his life was that he had the direct revelation of the Son of God so that he might become the preacher among the Gentiles, cf. Gal. 1:12, 16. In this connection it is pertinent to recall the comment of G.W.H. Lampe: "Whatever Paul precisely meant when he said that God 'revealed his Son en emoi',<sup>1</sup> he intended to say more than that he had seen an apocalyptic vision of Christ in glory. It involved the transformation of his whole life through faith that Jesus had not only been exalted to heaven but was a present spiritual reality 'in whom' Paul now lived and who lived in him".<sup>2</sup> All this implies that we will be able to grasp the meaning of Paul's conversion experience more clearly if it is construed as an event of God's revelation of himself to the individual in his historical existence. The following statement of Abraham J. Heschel admirably summarizes my line of argument: "The trouble is that religion has become "religion" - institution, dogma, ritual. It is no longer an event. Its acceptance involves neither risk nor strain ..... There is no substitute for faith, no alternative for revelation, no surrogate for commitment ....."<sup>3</sup>

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1. NEB: 'To me and through me'; Gal. 1:16.

2. G.W.H. Lampe, "The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ" in Christ, Faith and History, eds. S.W. Sykes and J.P. Clayton (Cambridge, 1972), p. 111.

3. As quoted in John Cogley, Religion in a Secular Age (London, 1968), p. 4.



One other aspect of Radhakrishnan's understanding of one's religious experience is that of the man-ward aspect of religion - inwardizing of one's religious experience. This can be seen from the following quotation as referred to earlier: "The way to rise out of our ego-centred consciousness to the divine plane is through the focusing of all our energies, intellectual, emotional and volitional on God. Then our whole being is transformed and lifted up into the unity and universality of spirit".<sup>1</sup> From this statement one can infer that Radhakrishnan's emphasis on the man-ward aspect of religion unmistakably individualizes the category of the freedom of the will which is accorded supreme and sole importance. In like manner, Bultmann also emphasizes the aspect of human freedom to make decisions in one's historicity. This becomes obvious when we look at some of his recurring statements. For Bultmann, man's essence resides "in the will".<sup>2</sup> Earlier on in the first chapter we observed that Bultmann is so strongly opposed to the Greek science because it does not see man in his historicity. He makes his argument with considerable force and persuasiveness as the passage<sup>3</sup> shows.

While on the one hand he so untiringly stresses the individual's freedom to make decisions, on the other hand, with

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, The Bhagavadgītā, pp. 254-55.

2. Primitive Christianity In Its Contemporary Setting, p. 180.

3. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 214, quoted on pp. 63-64.

equal force he argues for the idea of authentic existence, viz. openness to the future as God's gift offered to man ( a burning conviction of Bultmann which is not shared by Radhakrishnan. In view of this there can scarcely be any doubt that Bultmann's chief purpose is to emphasize two aspects of one's 'genuineness of life' - the individual's freedom to act for himself and his willingness to accept authentic existence as a gift from God.

This seems quite cogent and convincing in so far as it affirms the indispensibility of decision. What is so much in the foreground of these writers (Radhakrishnan and Bultmann) is their characteristic insistence on the individual's freedom of the will as being the essential, if not the sole means of achieving one's authentic existence. But the primary and most profound issue in our understanding of true freedom is whether we can so inwardize the category of the freedom of the will as these two thinkers are inclined to do. To put it more plainly, the crucial question remains whether, in their account of it, the man-ward aspect of religious experience does not take precedence over the divine aspect of one's religious experience. It is true that Bultmann characteristically emphasizes the fact that the believer experiences the possibility of faith-decision as grace, it is only as a gift of grace that he can understand his decision. This explanation perhaps does not immediately command assent since, on his own showing, faith decision in the first place is "a venture", an "absolute decision" - "a leap into the abyss" - but when the individual looks back to consider whether he has made the right decision

or not, only then does he realize that it was because of God's grace that he has made a right decision. We can hardly confuse the faith-decision with the life of the individual under grace. Time and again Bultmann emphatically stresses that a faith-decision needs no props of objectivity which means that the man-ward aspect is obviously emphasized at the cost of divine operation. Of course, Bultmann contends that the Kerygmatic message challenges the hearer to decide either for God or against him. But his contention of the power of the proclamation of the Church is another issue which needs fuller discussion and we shall return to this later on.

The root of the trouble either in the existentialist theology of Bultmann or in Eastern existentialism, in my opinion, lies primarily in their characteristic emphasis on the man-ward aspect of religion. As a result, the exponents of both these schools of thought are reluctant to consider the divine operation in one's religious experience. It is perhaps in this sense that a comparison of Bultmann's system of ideas with that of Radhakrishnan is most justified.

Radhakrishnan's understanding of the human self has been explained in some detail in the preceding chapter. It is no inconsiderable merit of his entire discussion on the meaning of the self to have brought richer and more living content to it with respect to its role in the community. Perhaps the most lasting impression he leaves is that in his works the 'neo-orthodox' reaction against Sankara's individualistic concept of salvation reached its fullest elaboration. Radhakrishnan's consistent emphasis on the nature and role of the

individual in the context of the community comes out, as referred to earlier, in the following statement: "The peculiar privilege of the human self is that he can consciously join and work for the whole and embody in his whole life the purpose of the whole".<sup>1</sup>

In a similar manner, the late F.H. Bradley, the master builder of western idealism raised this place of individuality to an appreciably new clarity when he improved on Goethe's saying: "'Be a whole or join a whole'" by adding "'You cannot be a whole, unless you join a whole'"<sup>2</sup> This striking similarity between Bradley and Radhakrishnan may suggest that the latter has not only taken account of western idealism but also was greatly influenced by it. And as the ablest apologist of modern Hinduism Radhakrishnan sought to lay the ground for a far-reaching and profound improvement on the traditional Hindu understanding of the self.

Let us now examine what Bultmann has to say on the nature and place of the individual in community. He observes: "The will to be one's self is the presupposition of real community - for only men who are 'persons', that is, who are each one of them their selves, can be in a real community". "It is an established fact for Christian belief that man can only receive his self from God, and that he only receives it when his withdrawal from the world - which in the last analysis means his self-surrender - is a radical one". "In bringing him to himself,

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1. An Idealist View of Life, pp. 273-74.

2. F.H. Bradley, Ethical Studies (Oxford, 1927), p. 79.

and liberating him from himself, God's grace has liberated him for his neighbour". "God's words and God's demand make man an isolated individual being".<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the implication of all these observations is as Dietrich von Oppen explains, that the "individual, who, in the last analysis, is alone and unable to be represented by another...., ..." <sup>2</sup> And Bultmann's point of view is even better explained by Baker when he says that "man is a slave to his own anxieties, he cannot be himself, and thus he cannot give himself away to others in love".<sup>3</sup>

Of course, Bultmann understands man exclusively in relation to God and he repeatedly stresses that "the genuineness of life" is a gift offered to man from God. This is, indeed, his most convincing theological proposition. However, it must be said that his theology is so much couched in the language of the individual's authentic life which has little to bear upon the life of the community. (Incidentally, it will be noted that Bultmann's idea of the authentic person as being open to the neighbour is rightly pointed out but perhaps not consistently elaborated in his system). It is in this sense that in the hands of Bultmann the whole sphere of the ethical is perhaps reduced to man in his radical openness. Besides, it has long been a commonplace of both Christian and western thought that man is not a lonely stranger in the universe; on the contrary, his life is united with all that exists. Existence is not

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1. Essays, pp. 293, 302, 303 and 78.

2. Dietrich von Oppen, "Man in the Open Situation", Journal for Theology and the Church, Vol. Two (1965), p. 145.

3. T.G.A. Baker, "Rudolf Bultmann" in The New Theologians: Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, Tillich, Teilhard de Chardin (London, 1964), p. 5.

just a private affair; it is 'societal'. This is all the more true of the believer, or, if one prefers, the member of the Christian community. Understood from this angle, Bultmann's idea of the individual in his historicity is open to a number of formidable objections. One major charge against him is that for all its many merits his theology revolves around the individual's inwardization with almost no mention of community in the structure of which one finds the true fulfilment of his individuality. For it is only within the order of community that man develops to the full his separateness as a person. In point of fact, one of the distinctive ideas of Paul's thought is that God's purpose is not fulfilled simply in the "authentic individuals", to use the jargon of the 'theology of existence', but in the redemption of humanity. The foregoing discussion makes it clear that in so far as Radhakrishnan so stoutly upholds the idea of the individual's true freedom within the context of community one cannot avoid the impression that his distinctive idea of the self scores over Bultmann's understanding of the human self.

If, however, Bultmann were asked why he places so much emphasis on the individual in his historicity his answer would be that Kierkegaard's understanding of existence is the pointer in the right direction. In fact, Kierkegaard held that existence in being related to itself knows itself related to the transcendent power which establishes this relationship. Bultmann's writings prove beyond doubt that this is also his own conviction and his defence of which has become a rather hotly debated issue in dialectical theology. At this point, how-



ever the question becomes insistent whether the attainment of personhood does not consist in our granting personhood to others and in helping them to actualize it. The concern of Bultmann's more cautious critics like Buri and of his left wing critics like Jaspers is to expand this more individualistic conception of Bultmann to include being with others. Buri contends: "God is the great 'Thou' about whom I do not know unless I know this 'Thou' within the co-human sphere".<sup>1</sup> This is further fortified by Jasper's comment: "In religion there flows a stream of communal life that lies beyond the reach of philosophy ..."<sup>2</sup> All this makes it clear that a theology of community is a necessary supplement to the 'theology of existence'.

While dealing with Radhakrishnan's concept of history in the last chapter we have shown that his thought unquestionably displays an intense interest in personal history rather than in a cyclic movement of history as in the case for classical Hinduism. His concept of human freedom reflects not only the outright disapproval of the fatalistic conception of karma but also the limits of his agreement with classical Hindu theologians in general. This shows that he has made a major contribution to the development of a new understanding of history. As we have seen<sup>3</sup> Radhakrishnan holds the view that

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1. As quoted by E.T. Long, "Jasper's Philosophy of Existence as a Model for Theological Reflection", *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. III. No.1. (Spring, 1972), p. 40.

2. Karl Jaspers, "Myth and Religion" in *Kerygma and Myth II*, ed. H.W. Bartsch, tr. R.H. Fuller (London, 1962), p. 175.

3. See above, p. 121.

man directs his destiny and the free act of individuals gives a new form and meaning to history.

In order to make our comparison of Radhakrishnan's view of history with that of Bultmann more intelligible, at the risk of repetition let us look again more closely at some of Bultmann's statements reflecting his view of history. It has long been known that his concept of history is sharply opposed to the traditional Christian understanding of history, as a linear process. Bultmann's "punctiliar" view of time lays stress on the present moment, the eschatological now of decision. In the first chapter we have alluded to the fact that Bultmann is not only largely influenced by Dilthey's philosophy of history but also has a lively admiration for the work of Collingwood. The difference between Dilthey's understanding of history as well as of hermeneutics and Collingwood's view of history is explained by Brown as follows: "Dilthey drew a sharp distinction between history and the natural sciences and insisted that in historical research we relive the experience of the person studied". But for Collingwood, "the historian thinks himself into the action to discern the thought of the agent. Not a clinical observation of what happened but an existential relation between the historian and the event is called for. This leads to self-understanding on the part of the historian".<sup>1</sup> This makes it clear that Bultmann evidently takes his thought-forms from these schools of thought. In his book, History and Eschatology, Bultmann has given a

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1. Raymond E. Brown, S.S. "After Bultmann What? - An Introduction to the Post-Bultmannians", *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. XXVI (1964), p. 7 fn.5 and pp. 7-8.

more adequate expression to Collingwood's view of history. He affirms: "History gains meaning only when the historian himself stands within history and takes part in history".<sup>1</sup> Heidegger's significant statement that "the poverty of the 'categorical' means at our disposal, and the unsureness of the primary ontological horizons, become the more obstrusive, the more the problem of history is traced to its primordial roots"<sup>2</sup> must have been also the background of Bultmann's concept of history. This is seen from his quoting with approval an important observation of Heidegger: "Following the hints of Dilthey, Heidegger says in his analysis of the human being as temporal-historical that the human being chooses its genuine existence by resolution and is thereby brought into simplicity of its destiny".<sup>3</sup> As we have seen,<sup>4</sup> Bultmann's own view of history is that the responsible decisions of individuals are the clue to the meaning of history. The individual cannot see the meaning of history as a spectator. Bultmann writes: "A 'Weltanschauung', we may say, is the more legitimated the more it expresses the historicity of the human being".<sup>5</sup>

From these foregoing statements it becomes obvious that Bultmann never ceases to emphasize that Historie must become Geschichte

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1. History and Eschatology, p. 119.

2. M. Heidegger, Being and Time, trs. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (London, 1962), p. 429.

3. History and Eschatology, p. 146.

4. See above p. 78.

5. History and Eschatology, p. 149.

which qualifies one's existence here and now. And this view of history is part of his programme for demythologizing and the existential interpretation of faith. He firmly believes that the present and the past become together as one in faith's response to the Word. The logical implication of this view is, as Ott observes, that for Bultmann, "genuine historical reality exists only in the now of "historical" action, in the now of understanding and decision".<sup>1</sup> Bultmann explains personality, one's personal history in terms of "encounter" with God who judges and challenges one in the kerygma. From this he argues that the true skandalon is an event in which the selfhood of the believer is actually altered, ..... It is not a logical contradiction but an existential event, an occurrence in the present in which one experiences freedom from one's old self and freedom for one's new self.<sup>2</sup> From the above statements of Bultmann it is evident that by revelation he means that God comes to man in the kerygma. And he not only explains with clarity and ingenuity the relation of the historical to revelation but also puts us in his debt by bringing to clear focus the idea that: "Radical freedom would be freedom from himself ..... But man cannot get such freedom by his own will and strength, for in such effort, he would remain 'the old man'; he can only receive this freedom as gift".<sup>3</sup> This is the distinctive presupposition of Bultmann's existentialist

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1. Heinrich Ott, "Objectification and Existentialism" in Kerygma and Myth II, p. 323.

2. cf. Rudolf Bultmann, 'Das Befremdliche des Christlichen Glaubens' in G.V. III, p. 205 as tr. in E.T. Long, Jaspers and Bultmann, p. 71.

3. History and Eschatology, p. 150.

theology and in this sense there is that basic difference between his understanding of soteriology and that of Radhakrishnan.

But where then do these two writers converge? It is in their understanding of human personality that they express similar viewpoints. That is, it is from their concept of history that we can institute a comparison between them. In order to do this one need recall what Bultmann means by personality. For him, personality is also temporal-historical and is constant only as a possibility which is ever to be realized in terms of human will and decision. For Radhakrishnan also, to possess a true personality "one has to realize new possibilities". "Man can fling a flaming torch into the darkness of the future". "There is the play of the contingent". As a Christian theologian Bultmann affirms: "That man is in the world is due to an event, to the creation of God; it is not to be deduced from the eternal necessity of a cosmic continuum". "I live in my decisions in which I myself am at stake, either to win my self or lose it".<sup>1</sup> For Radhakrishnan, a "neo-orthodox" Hindu thinker, "Each individual is his own authentic self, ..... Each has to tread his path".<sup>2</sup> For him, the human self is an aspect of the world process and he can become an organized whole if he can unify his life. This makes it clear that for him the achieving of authenticity of the human being is left to himself. This is in line

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1. Existence and Faith, pp. 208, 214.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, Recovery of Faith, p. 180.

with his traditional Hindu dogma. At this point two remarks have to be made: 1) for both Bultmann and Radhakrishnan it is the contingent that matters most; 2) both give supreme value to the will and decisions of man in his historical existence, a position which gives something relative a status of an absolute. This inversely, hinges upon their basic presupposition that man is a self-choosing subject and it is he who is at stake. It is precisely in this sense that we can infer a striking similarity between these two systems of thought.

One cannot fail to see the force of their argument that the human will is the primary, if not the sole means of the individual to display the degree of personality to which he can reach. It is also true that the personal categories are the most adequate aids for one's religious experience. But the crucial question is whether this exercise of one's will, unaided as it is, can be constantly conducive to a continuous search after truth. If it can why is it that a person like Paul failed to do the right knowing what was good and what was evil? He confessed to the same feeling in this manner: "The good which I want to do, I fail to do; but what I do is the wrong which is against my will; and if what I do is against my will, clearly it is no longer I who am the agent, but sin that has its lodging in me". (Rom. 7:19-20, NEB).

We may fully agree with Bultmann and Radhakrishnan that the will is the crucial element of the human being. However, it may be pointed out that it is ineffective to live in humble believing obedience on God. Is there any escape from the ineffectiveness of the human will to decide for God? Can



either the 'rational' or the personal consciousness of the being be the sole motive force of making him responsive to the source of all being? It would appear that existentialist philosophy be it Western or Eastern tends to be part of a way of thinking that so emphasizes the one aspect, i.e. man as a choosing agent that the rest is lost sight of, viz. the aspect of divine operation. Bultmann however, may argue that the 'revelation theology' or his 'kerygmatic theology' challenges man to decide for God. And with this I would not quarrel save to suggest that in practice this has not proved very convincing. If, on the other hand, in accordance with Bultmann's view, the proclamation of the Church had been able to convert the human will it would have made all the difference in the world.

In his theology Bultmann shifts the weight of theological opinion to 'revelation theology' and 'personal history'. This position of Bultmann perhaps stems from Heidegger's conception of the individual which was brought under the magnifying glass by Martin Buber when he observed: "For him [Heidegger] the individual has the essence of man in himself and brings it to existence by becoming a "resolved" self".<sup>1</sup> It is true that Bultmann's conclusion that God comes to man in grace and judgment constituting his call to man to repentance has been drawn with the greatest clarity and consistency. This shows that Bultmann sees man from the perspective of 'kerygmatic theology'. At this point one can ask with apparent justice whether with this point of view we are not coerced

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1. M. Buber, Between Man and Man, tr. R.G. Smith (London, 1947), p. 171.

into allowing personal history to swallow up universal history, as Paul conceives of it. In this connection it is instructive to note what Bishop L. Newbigin says: "The worldwide mission of the church has a faith regarding the final consummation of God's purpose in the power of which it is possible to find meaning for world history which does not make personal history meaningless, and meaning for personal history which does not make world history meaningless".<sup>1</sup>

If the shift of emphasis in Radhakrishnan and Bultmann is turned to the man-ward aspect of religion, how then do they explain the transcendence of God? They both are characteristically silent on divine transcendence as it is in itself. All that Bultmann says is that the paradigm of personal relations is thought to be the most adequate analogy for our talk about God and that 'kerygmatic theology' understood from the existential principle of 'encounter' is the key to our understanding of God's being and action. By reason of these two principles Bultmann firmly believes that he gives due recognition to the transcendent reality of God since for him the revelation takes place in the word of preaching. He affirms: "Revelation is not illumination or the communication of knowledge, but rather an occurrence, ..... Thus revelation must be an occurrence that directly concerns us, that takes place in us ourselves", "I am given a knowledge, namely, of myself, of my immediate now, in which and for which the word of proclamation is spoken

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1. J.E. Lesslie Newbigin, Honest Religion for Secular Man (London, 1966), p. 46.

to me".<sup>1</sup>

One can ask whether Bultmann's insistence on the extraordinary reliability of the preached word taking the place of Offenbarwerden can carry conviction. Can the objectivity of the Word of God be located solely in the kerygma? One would be tempted to say that Bultmann's insistence on the power of kerygma definitely underscores the other possibilities of God's revelation - God himself reaching out to his own creation. Certainly, there are other divine possibilities of human response, e.g. the transcendent Reality revealing itself not in some object in the world but in the inner consciousness of man.

C. Comparison of Gandhi's anthropology with that of Bultmann:

To institute a comparison between Gandhi's understanding of man and that of Bultmann one can begin by asking how they both understand the historicity of man. In Gandhi's opinion, man cannot regenerate himself unless he hazards for himself. Bultmann also argues that man achieves his existence in the sphere of concrete situation, in his individual responsibility and decisions.<sup>2</sup> Bultmann characteristically insists on man's creatureliness - 'man's being is removed from his control'. Gandhi also speaks of the God-man relationship in a similar fashion. He writes: "man cannot control results, and when he thinks he does<sup>7</sup>, he comes to grief".<sup>3</sup> Given the assumption that Gandhi is not an academic philosopher, in the words of P.T. Raju, one finds less use of philosophical terminology

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1. Existence and Faith, pp. 78 and 88.

2. cf. Essays, p. 78, quoted on p. 44.

3. Harijan, 23 March 1940.

in his system than in that of an existentialist theologian. Nevertheless, the idea of 'man being unable to control results' in Gandhi's thought perhaps strikes a note parallel to Bultmann's idea of man's being not at his own disposal. Both these men speak of human freedom in eloquent and glowing terms and at the same time equally emphasize the "infinite qualitative difference between God and man". Following Heidegger's existentialist analysis of human existence Bultmann repeatedly stresses that man is on each occasion called to decision and stands at risk. Seen from this perspective of human existence his explanation of man's relation to God comes more into view in his essay 'The Crisis in Belief' where he says: "Real belief in God is not a proposition which one can have ready to hand in order to evade the challenge of the 'moment'", "one which is never a question of knowledge gained by research and preservable possession, but is always one of the will and responsiveness to the 'moment'.<sup>1</sup>

The implication is that the concept of God as he is in himself, viz. theological objectification as in some circles of classical Christianity is an untenable doctrine in Bultmann's opinion. His contention is: "Jesus Christ cannot be objectively established as an Eschatological Event, so that one could there and then believe in him. Rather he is such - indeed, to put it more exactly, he becomes such - in the encounter when the Word which proclaims him meets with belief: ....."<sup>2</sup> By this he

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1. Essays, pp. 7 and 19.

2. Ibid., p. 286.

indeed sheds light upon the traditional conception of God by showing the relevance of the living word of God to man's existence. If he thus sheds light he also arouses embarrassment by refusing to recognize the other theological position that God is always interested in this world which he has made, more accurately, actively interested in it and concerned about it. In other words, he finds it hard to accept the proposition that God is the maker of history. As a historian he cannot agree that God acts in history. For him, as J.C.G. Greig explains, "eschatology is discourse about the challenge of God to the individual in his individual situation, ..."<sup>1</sup> So the view that God acts in history, in Bultmann's argument, makes God into an object among other objects and hence cannot escape the fallacy of immanentism. For him, God is Subject and never object for man - the basic presupposition of the exponents of dialectical theology.

But if we are to do justice to the New Testament teaching of the God-man relationship it may well be necessary for us to recognize that there are two trains of thought, especially in Paul. That is, God is immanent in an impersonal way, and imminent (i.e. close to; 'nearer than nearness' in a personal way. To put this differently, does the absence of faith for Paul mean that God will be shut out of his world and unable to act within? No, Paul could never think this way! On the contrary he might say that God's activity would take a different and terrible form. To this form of God's activity, the oppo-

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1. J.C.G. Greig, "Some Aspects of Hermeneutics: A brief Survey", Religion A Journal of Religion and Religions, Vol. I (Autumn, 1971), p. 138.

site of salvation, Paul gives the name 'wrath', (Rom. 1:18; 2:5, 8). Dodd explains this in his comment on the phrase the "wrath of God" as follows: "Paul carefully avoids ever making God the subject of the verb "to be angry". "The wrath of God", therefore, as seen in actual operation, consists in leaving sinful human nature to "stew in its own juice"". <sup>1</sup>

But, if on the other hand, Bultmann refuses to recognize this New Testament affirmation of God's dealings with the world and holds fast to his principle of 'moment' or 'encounter', it is a fair judgment to say that at the hands of Bultmann the eternal is 'psychologized' - a private inward realm of being becomes a focus of God's encounter and nowhere else. To put it more plainly, Paul's doctrine of God is turned into anthropology. If Robinson's remark that "Bultmann's emphasis upon the formal character of God's demand which sin rejects is too absolute". <sup>2</sup> is valid, then it is equally valid to say that the relative experience of the individual is absolutized. As a result, except for the individual's experience, the transcendent remains the unknown beyond the limit - God appears to be totally removed from the reality of the world.

Another aspect of Gandhi's anthropology concerns his understanding of God. It is worthy of note that his teaching on God reflects a strong sense of his theistic background. He

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1. C.H. Dodd, The meaning of Paul for Today (London, 1920), p. 63.

2. N.H.G. Robinson, "REVIEW" Theology of the New Testament, by R. Bultmann 2 Vols.", N.T.S., Vol. IV (1957-58), p. 341.



writes: "(Whilst) everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing power or spirit is God ..... God is life, Truth, Light. He is Love".<sup>1</sup> It is indeed admirable that like Tagore, Gandhi cannot think of the nature of the ultimate being apart from the contingent stuff of human living. He observes: "..... I identify Truth with the fullest life, and that is how it becomes a concrete thing. God is His whole creation, the whole existence .....<sup>2</sup>

All these observations of Gandhi unmistakably make it clear that he cannot understand God apart from humanity ( a view similar to that of Tagore). In Bultmann's thought also, the fundamental truth of the Biblical teaching is that the 'God whom we believe is known only concretely'. For him, God is known not to perception. Tillich's definition of God as the ultimate ground of human being is given a new meaning by Bultmann in that 'His being ultimate can be known only through his being historical for us - hence he in several instances speaks of the incursion of the transcendent, "of the word made flesh" into history. His own words are: "The transcendence of God is not as in myth reduced to immanence. Instead, we have the paradox of a transcendent God present and active in history: 'The Word became flesh'".<sup>3</sup> When Julius Schniewind

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1. Young India, October 11, 1928, cited in The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology, p. 229.

2. Harijan, 25 May 1935.

3. Kerygma and Myth I, p. 44.

writes that the scandal concerning the person of Jesus is what "the Christian Church has always asserted, [that] our salvation is One who was involved in all the relativity of history",<sup>1</sup> Bultmann answers that he is in definite agreement with him. He wishes to say exactly the same thing.<sup>2</sup>

When we look at the affirmation of these two writers, i.e. Gandhi and Bultmann, we must conclude that these men are at pains to establish one basic presupposition for the philosophy of religion, namely that God in his significance for humanity is known concretely - confrontation between man and God is possible and Being is known not as a pure, absolute Thou but as involved in the contingent. It is precisely in this sense that Gandhi's understanding of God comes close to that of Bultmann.

It is of particular interest to note that Gandhi develops his own concept of history. For him, as referred to earlier, "the sum total of the energy of mankind is not to bring us down but to lift us up, and that is the result of the definite, if unconscious, working of the law of love".<sup>3</sup> For much of his religious thought the Gītā was the enduring inspiration and from it he drew a conception of man as well as of history. He writes: "Man is the maker of his destiny in the sense that he has the freedom of choice as to the manner in which he uses that freedom .....".<sup>4</sup> He views man's freedom not

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1. Kerygma and Myth I, p. 69.

2. cf. Ibid., p. 111.

3. As cited by B.G. Gokhale, Indian Thought Through The Ages, p. 20.

4. Harijan, 23 March 1940.

only as a postulate like the morality of Kant's Practical Reason: 'thou canst because thou shouldst', but also as the responsibility of each human being. This idea of freedom is closely bound up with his conception of man as being unable to control results. Hence we cannot find in his thought that aesthetic pride in man which prompted Tagore to declare that "God's need of man is as urgent as man's need of God".<sup>1</sup>

Gandhi expands the idea of man's complete surrender to the will of God. He does not however, think this takes away his act of decision as a responsible being. "It is for God to take our broken barge across the stream", he says, "but it is for us to put in our best effort. It is for us to plug a whole in its bottom or, if water gets into the boat, to throw it out. In that case the barge will keep floating despite the hole. But it will float only when there is God's hand behind it. I would therefore say that man must make an endeavour and for the result depend upon God's grace".<sup>2</sup> This indicates that the key note of all this explanation of human freedom is the presupposition that 'man is the maker of his destiny'.

Interestingly enough, Bultmann also reaches a similar idea of human freedom which he explains, as we have seen in the passage.<sup>3</sup>

This explains why we may probably find a point of resemblance between these two thinkers inasmuch as they emphasize man's

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1. W.S. Naravane, Modern Indian Thought, p. 191.

2. As quoted by Chandrashankar Shukla, Gandhi's View of Life (Bombay, 1954), p. 60.

3. Existence and Faith, p. 214, quoted on pp. 63-64.

freedom in terms of his will and decisions. Let us now consider Bultmann's concept of history and see whether there is any point of contact between his thought and that of Gandhi. It is probably right to say that Bultmann accepts Heidegger's existential analysis of existence and profoundly modifies it by emphasizing that such an analysis cannot make up a man's mind in advance as to what the nature of that existence is to be. His own words are: "It tells that our authentic existence is realizable only in existence, which means existing always in the concrete here and now. But it does not claim that the existentialist analysis can create the existential understanding of the here and now ....."<sup>1</sup> More to the point is his adaptation of the view of history which rings true to the philosophy of history found in the systems of Dilthey and Collingwood. He put this very clearly and concisely: "Historicity is the nature of man who can never possess his genuine life in any present moment, but is always on the way and yet is not at the mercy of a course of history independent of himself. Every moment is the now of responsibility, of decision. From this the unity of history is to be understood".<sup>2</sup>

From this it appears clearly that the concept of history as implied by both the systems of Gandhi and Bultmann does not admit of any significance that can be given to history in general. This view of 'personal history' seems to accord very

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1. Kerygma and Myth I, pp. 193-94.

2. History and Eschatology, p. 143.

little or no importance to the traditional Christian idea of God 'as active in history'. This school finds it hard to see how God really intervenes in history. To subscribe to the view of such an intervention is to succumb to mythical thought, in short, to suppress the paradox of faith.

Nevertheless, it must be said that the distinctive idea that Judaism held is that God had visited and redeemed his people. Abraham J. Heschel makes a convincing comment: "The root of Jewish faith is ..... not a comprehension of abstract principles but an inner attachment to sacred events", a "commitment to revelation".<sup>1</sup>

Bultmann however, so strongly opposes the notion of world history as God's history on the basis of his belief that God can be revealed only in an 'event', 'encounter'. This contention of Bultmann that 'personal history' is the touchstone for the New Testament theology is now very much in the foreground of the present century theological debate. William Temple contended that "there is the coincidence of divinely guided events and minds divinely guided to interpret those events".<sup>2</sup> Following the same line of argument Leonard Hodgson writes: "'Revelation' is God's enlightening of the minds of men when they see the implications of any events, in the history of nature or the history of men".<sup>3</sup>

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1. As quoted by D. Sturm, "Naturalism, Historicism, And Christian Ethics: Toward A Christian Doctrine of Natural Law", The Journal of Religion, Vol. XIV (1964), p. 43.

2. William Temple, Nature, Man and God, (London, 1934), XXIV and p. 312.

3. As quoted in F. Gerald Downing, Has Christianity A Revelation? (London, 1964), p. 245.

Needless to say, this position is wholly unacceptable to the Bultmannian school, because for Bultmann, to propose an alternative explanation of the meaning of history, especially in terms of God as acting in all creation, furthering his purposes, is of dubious profit. It is however, to be noted that for Bultmann God reconciling the world in Christ unto himself is synonymous with the Church's proclamation of the kerygma. This presupposition is closely bound up with his concept of history. He affirms: "The subject of history is man".<sup>1</sup> At this point one important question presses itself upon us: Is not this position of Bultmann's similar to that of modern Indian thought? A close follower of Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave, explains God's dealings with the world as follows: "He has distributed intelligence to each one of His creation ... And He has advised them to seek guidance from their intelligence and act. And so the world goes on without His having to worry Himself about it. Indeed He has so far removed Himself from the scene that some of us are led even to doubt His existence ....."<sup>2</sup> Of course, it is to be recognized that Bultmann does not go so far as to doubt the existence of God. On the contrary, he takes the trouble to affirm quite emphatically God pro me. The point that can be made from the preceding quotation is that modern Indian thought spells out clearly the idea that God is apparently far removed from the plane of history. It is perhaps in this sense that we can see the striking parallel

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1. History and Eschatology, p. 143.

2. 'Our Unique Mission': speech at Chandil Samelan in Bihar, 9/5/53; from his Bhoodan Yajna (the act or project of land distribution to the landless).



between Bultmann's existential understanding of history and that of modern Hindu thinkers like Gandhi. This point is well brought out in a summary statement of Dr. J. McKenzie: "The Hebrew and Christian conception that the mind and heart of God are revealed in events within the temporal order is repugnant to the dominant tendencies in Hindu thought, according to which the Eternal is concealed, not revealed, by the temporal".<sup>1</sup>

This is, of course, not to overlook the fact that there is a fundamental difference of presupposition between Bultmann and Gandhi in respect to the understanding of authentic life. Bultmann affirms: "The man who understands his historicity radically, that is, ..... who understands his genuine life as an ever-future one, has to know that his genuine self can only be offered to him as a gift by the future".<sup>2</sup> Further, there is another marked difference between Gandhi's concept of history and that of Bultmann, namely that Bultmann repeatedly stresses the idea that eschatology is not something that takes place at the end of history. He understands eschatology in terms of an event in the individual's existence. In this sense he apparently dissolves eschatology into personal history.

Another important aspect of Gandhi's religious thought is that of his policy of the uplift of the community through the spirit of brotherly love towards one's neighbour. His concern can be approached and apprehended from the way in which he tried to handle the situation when he came up against racial contempt and discrimination. The spirit of brotherhood and

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1. J. McKenzie, Two Religions, (London, 1950), p. 94.

2. History and Eschatology, p. 150.

unity he learned from his close study of Islam and the spirit of service to his neighbour in need from his close association with Christian Church leaders and from the study of the New Testament, particularly the Sermon on the Mount, and probably the parables of the Last Judgment in chs. 24-25 of Mt's Gospel. His acceptance of the principle that he was his brother's keeper has indeed constituted a challenge to the Indian Christian Church. His conception of the role of the individual within the context of community has been far more profound than that of classical Hinduism according to which the individual's pursuit of his own salvation forms the core of religious pattern of the day in keeping with the time-hallowed truth that man's salvation must be found from within.

Keeping this in view we must now press our inquiry still further and consider what Bultmann has to say on the subject of the connection between the individual and community. His primary concern is to expound his hypothesis that the unchanging substance of the message of the New Testament ought to be understood in terms of human existence, more accurately, one's own historic existence. Hence, it is perhaps not too much to say that Bultmann has not analysed the nature and role of the Christian community more precisely and profoundly save to suggest that the Christian Church is the eschatological community commissioned to preach God's word to man. His own words are: "....., it is phenomenon of significant history, in the sense that it realizes itself in history".<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he

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1. Kerygma and Myth I, p. 43.

argues that "Man is asked, as it appears to me, only about the significance of the 'moment'. If it is right that the eschatological event places the believer in eschatological existence, takes him away from the world, he does not in any case have the task of having a significant formative influence !" <sup>1</sup> Bultmann has given more sustained and conscious attention to the aspect of individual's responsibility to choose either for God or the world and this has more or less become a central element in his system. So one cannot avoid the impression that in his account of the life of faith human freedom figures much more prominently than does love. His contention is that the possibilities of existence can be fulfilled only in the historical decision of the individual in which man comes to his authenticity. He observes: "Thus one cannot ever leave this crisis or this experience behind, not even as a believer". <sup>2</sup>

This is perhaps one of the deepest insights of Bultmann's interpretation of the Gospel. But one wonders whether he has given due consideration to the idea that man grasps himself only in the midst of a reciprocal relationship with others and for that matter, the existence of the Church as essential to the Gospel itself. One can argue that by reason of his programme of demythologizing, especially the emphasis on individual's present decision and the encounter with the Word of God Bultmann practically ignored the importance of the collective experience of the Christian community which Giovanni

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1. Essays, p. 289.

2. Ibid.

Miegge describes as "the community of the Spirit, the "Charismatic community", as being that community which is penetrated through and through by the Spirit of the Risen Christ".<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps in this sense that his existentialist theology is the science of the individual rather than, in the phraseology of Richard Hooker, the "Science of things divine".

D. The Comparison of Sri Aurobindo's anthropology with that of Bultmann:

In our discussion of Sri Aurobindo's concept of man in the foregoing chapter we have discovered that Aurobindo gave the concept of human freedom a place of prominence as over against the fatalistic conception of karma which he condemned uncompromisingly. This is too evident to need fuller explanation here. This characteristic emphasis of Aurobindo on human freedom is perhaps his unique contribution to history of the understanding of man in modern Indian thought. Aurobindo observes: "To fulfil God in man is man's manhood .....".<sup>2</sup> "The aspiration to exceed himself is delivered and articulate within him: ....."<sup>3</sup> "He has to realize his individuality ....., an ultimate arrival at a free and wide harmony and luminousness of knowledge and will and feeling and action and character, is the evident intention of his nature; ....."<sup>4</sup> He fur-

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1. Giovanni Miegge, Gospel and Myth in the Thought of Rudolf Bultmann, tr. Bishop Stephen Neill (London, 1960), p. 28.

2. The Life Divine I, p. 56.

3. The Life Divine II, p. 839.

4. Ibid., p. 594.

ther explains that "our imperfect mental instrumentation is not the last word of our possibilities, ..."<sup>1</sup>

All this makes it clear that even though Aurobindo uses a language reminiscent of his Hindu religious background yet his intense interest in developing a philosophy of human existence is perhaps not unlike that of Heidegger.<sup>2</sup> F. Spiegelberg observes that both Heidegger and Aurobindo express similar views "very much in contrast to the high esteem, sometimes the overestimation, in which reason and thinking is held among all other kinds of philosophers. There is a great deal of overemphasis and overestimation given to thinking. Herein Heidegger and Aurobindo agree".<sup>3</sup> Spiegelberg is right in asserting that Aurobindo stresses the primacy of epistemology over ontology of the Vedanta of Sankara. As earlier referred to, Heidegger points out that "the poverty of the 'categorical' means at our disposal and the unsureness of the primary ontological horizons become the more obtrusive, the more the problem of history is traced to its primordial roots".<sup>4</sup>

For Aurobindo, intuition is the hallmark of integral experience. This is amplified in his idea of inwardization which is described by P.T. Raju as follows: "what one has to develop, then, is integrality of personality. But the term 'integrality of

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1. The Life Divine II, p. 667.

2. For a fuller treatment of parallels between Heidegger and Aurobindo see J.N. Mohanty, Modern Philosophical Anthropology and the Concept of Man in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy (Bombay, 1956).

3. F. Spiegelberg, "Sri Aurobindo and Existentialism" in The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, p. 52.

4. M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 429.

personality' is not an ethical or merely psychological term. It is complete unification of all our being diversified into will, cognition, action and reality".<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps it is also in this sense that Aurobindo's idea of inwardization comes close to Heidegger's understanding of existence. It has been remarked that the philosophy of existence is anything but phenomenological self-analysis. For Heidegger, "It is not a speculation detached from man, but man himself, as he understands himself".<sup>2</sup>

J.N. Mohanty comments that "the cardinal principle of this philosophy [an integral philosophy of man] is the principle that man is what he can be; that human existence is full of possibilities; ..... This coincides with the findings of such researchers as M. Heidegger ....."<sup>3</sup> In this comment one can detect a striking similarity between Aurobindo and Heidegger in that in Heidegger's existential philosophy a more adequate expression was given to horizontal possibilities. His position, roughly speaking, may be analysed as follows: being-in-the world, with its three components, the world, the being who is in-the-world, and the inherence of that being-in-the world. Further, his idea of existence is that man's being is a being-able-to be. Claude Geoffré points out that "Being in history as a characteristic element of the existence of man

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1. P.T. Raju, The Philosophical Traditions of India, p. 229.

2. M. Heidegger, Sein und Zeit, p. 325.

3. J.N. Mohanty, "Integralism and Modern Philosophical Anthropology", in The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, pp. 157-58.



signifies that in each 'now' of decision man is responsible for the past and the future" - the three dimensions of the moment: coming-towards, present, future, are, for Heidegger, "extases"; .....<sup>1</sup> In fact, his position has been well defined by the late Dr. John Baillie: "The leading principle of his philosophy is that of the horizons, as he calls them, within which human life has to be lived and which delimit the possibilities open to it. The final horizon is death --- the death of the individual, but also the final death of society .....; it is "the iron ring round existence" .....".<sup>2</sup>

These statements make it clear that Aurobindo does not only appear to use terminology, quite independently of Heidegger, of this phenomenological self-analysis but also argues for the apparent self-sufficiency of a more inwardized, a more self-conscious being.

In the light of these apparent similarities between Aurobindo's understanding of man and Heidegger's philosophy of existence it is proper for us now to examine Bultmann's anthropology more closely and see if we can draw some lines of comparison between the systems of these two writers. Bultmann incorporates into his theological project the Heideggerian concept of "ec-sistence" to express the historicity of Dasein. In other words, in contrast to ancient philosophy, Bultmann does not start from the reality of the things of the cosmos but tries

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1. Claude Geoffré, "Bultmann on Kerygma and History" in Rudolf Bultmann in Catholic Thought, eds. T.F. O'Meara O.P. and D.M. Weissner, O.P. (New York, 1968), p. 171 and 171 fn.

2. John Baillie, Invitation to Pilgrimage (London, 1942), p.95.

to explain temporality starting from human reality. He further explains this as follows: "We believe that we understand the being of man more truly when we designate it as historical. And we understand by the historical nature of man's being that his being is a potentiality to be".<sup>1</sup> The implication is that because man is essentially a potentiality-for-being, he can live in a way that is either authentic or inauthentic. For him, "the genuine life of man is always before him; it is always to be apprehended, to be realized".<sup>2</sup> This he expresses in a slightly different way in the <sup>same</sup> ~~statement~~ *as in Essays*.<sup>3</sup>

However, the distinctive feature of Bultmann's existentialist theology is that in Christ God meets man here and now (in the kerygma), and offers him a new possibility of understanding his own existence. He never ceases to emphasize that one's radical freedom would be freedom from himself and he can only receive this freedom as a gift. This makes it unmistakably clear that for Bultmann, however much philosophy can describe the reality of human existence still it cannot take the place of the liberating Word.

Keeping this in view, it is necessary to clear the ground before we begin to institute a possible comparison between the systems of Aurobindo and Bultmann. Aurobindo, as has been stated above in the second chapter, was a true follower of

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1. Faith and Understanding I, p. 149.

2. History and Eschatology, p. 140.

3. Essays, p. 78 quoted on p. 44.

Sākta philosophy and hence was prepared to play down the role of introspection, the chief tenet of Vedantism. By indicating an alternative approach to religion, as of classical Hinduism, i.e. by emphasizing the aspect of the unreserved surrender of the individual to power that comes from above, Aurobindo seems to have shifted the focus of attention to Ramanuja's concept of religion - it is all God's grace, man depends absolutely on God. He could not persuade himself to follow the rather influential school of the Advaita-Vedanta and thereby incessantly emphasized man's complete dependence on God for a consummation of his spiritual experience. To make this consummation possible three things are necessary namely: "Consciousness, plasticity and unreserved surrender, ..."<sup>1</sup>

In Aurobindo's system the idea of atmasamarpana - an absolute and unconditional surrender of the individual to God is a dominant concept. All this only reveals that as a neo-Vedantic thinker Aurobindo expressly emphasizes two trains of thought, i.e. (i) man as a choosing agent has to realize his individuality resulting in a free and wide harmony and luminousness of knowledge, will, feeling, action and character; (ii) man must unconditionally surrender himself to meet with the power of the divine issuing in his true freedom. At the heart of Aurobindo's position lies the fact that man cannot achieve salvation by himself. It is the power of God - the Divine Sakti - coming into the soul that can effect the transforma-

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1. As quoted by S.K. Maitra, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, p. 12.

tion that is desired.

Keeping this in view let us now look a little more carefully at what Bultmann says on the subject of transition from inauthentic to authentic life. He affirms: "In the decision of faith I do not decide on a responsible action, but a new understanding of myself as free from myself by the grace of God and as endowed with my new self, and this is at the same time the decision to accept a new life grounded in the grace of God".<sup>1</sup> All this goes to show beyond a shadow of doubt that Bultmann's adoption of the existentialists' analysis of existence ought to be supplemented with the concept of one's surrender to God to receive his authentic existence as God's free gift. Further, in the light of statements about Bultmann's interpretation of the Gospel cited above, one can discern certain similarities between Aurobindo and Bultmann although they differ in details of terminology due to their respective confessional backgrounds. That is, as an existentialist theologian Bultmann sticks to his evangelical faith by retaining the theological proposition that the Christ-event is the eschatological deed of God which cannot admit of any demythologization and that it is unique in its effects on human beings. Aurobindo, on the other hand, as a Sākta philosopher, insists on the divine power to transform the individual. (Incidentally, it is to be noted that "[In all gnostic beings' consciousness] personality and impersonality are not opposite principles; they are inseparable aspects of

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1. History and Eschatology, p. 152.

one and the same reality. This reality is not the ego but the being, who is impersonal in his stuff of nature but forms out of it an expressive personality.....<sup>1</sup>). It is indeed admirable that these men assert that man as a choosing agent gains genuine life through his self-surrender to God. However, one can ask whether this theory has not overlooked or oversimplified an important aspect of one's religious experience, namely the divine operation. (Incidentally, it will be noted that by reason of the use of the phrase, eschatologisch, coined by himself Bultmann, at least in his intention, speaks of the act of God facing the individual. However, his scheme of thinking spells out very little of the idea that an effective preaching happens only when divine event and the Spirit - guided mind coincide. Hence, one cannot help feeling that he leaves open the question of divine operation in the individual's act of faith). How can man come to the stage of self-surrender to God is the basic question of the philosophy of religion. Both these men reply that it is man who has to act: "he is not allowed to look round for guarantees, not even the guarantees of a moral law, which take off or lighten the weight of responsibility, ....."<sup>2</sup>

Christian theology has never resorted to looking for guarantees in the act of faith even though Thomistic realism held fast to the idea that the human will cannot be converted to decide for God unless God converts it. Perhaps this was an

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1. The Life Divine II, p. 1067.

2. History and Eschatology, p.150.

extreme position; my own view of human response to God is that the will of the person and the divine operation are indistinguishably related to each other.

Furthermore, in Bultmann's system the language appropriate for speaking of an act of God can only be analogical. He writes: "The fact that the word of the Scriptures is God's Word cannot be demonstrated objectively; it is an event which happens here and now". He adds: "Trust in a friend can rest solely on the personality of my friend which I can perceive only when I trust him. There cannot be any trust or love without risk ..... the ground and object of faith are identical ....., because we cannot speak of what God is in Himself but only of what He is doing to us and with us".<sup>1</sup>

Two inferences can be drawn from these statements: I) the individual's authentic life is achieved through a venture or risk - faith can never lose its character as supreme risk, the utmost adventure: II) any talk of God's operation apart from his meeting the individual here and now in the kerygma is fraught with mythological objectification of God. Bultmann doubtless sets aside the mythological language about God. But nevertheless, there are divergent views on the question of supernaturalism. R.W. Hepburn argues that "doubtless a Christian ought not to see a miracle as a divine conjuring trick, but should interpret the miracle in personal and moral categories. But that does not give Bultmann warrant to say, 'the God of revelation is the God of judgment and forgiveness,

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1. Jesus Christ and Mythology, pp. 71, 72-73.



not the Cause of abnormal phenomena". He adds: "Distortion is inevitable when all relations come to be conceived on the model of interpersonal encounter".<sup>1</sup>

Bultmann's characteristic emphasis on the analogical and non-mythological language about God undermines two aspects of religion: (i) it overlooks the value of propositional statements which are universally valid and necessary, i.e. there is an unconditional imperative; man is finite and imperfectible; man can live under God's guidance; (ii) the reality of the world subsists between God and existence, or, in the words of Bosanquet, "our world of sense of 'claims and counter-claims' is rooted in reality".<sup>2</sup> The human will is not the all-embracing or all-inclusive reality of human personality as some existentialists hold and human feelings and attitudes are not the only "observable" realities. Consciousness and cognition are also component parts of the whole man (incidentally, Bultmann does take account of cognition as he develops his theme of self-understanding). Consciousness in the sense of immediacy (in a Cartesian sense) is itself the incomprehensible immediacy of our existing. J. Moltmann observes: "Descartes' third Meditation on the immediate self-consciousness and the consciousness of God therein given takes up - via the French Augustine renaissance of the seventeenth century - the reflection of Augustine quoted above".<sup>3</sup>

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1. R.W. Hepburn, "Demytheologizing and the Problem of Validity", in New Essays in Philosophical Theology, eds. A. Flew and A. MacIntyre (London, 1966), pp. 233, 241.

2. As quoted in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 330.

3. Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 63.

This now brings us to the concept of history as understood by both Aurobindo and Bultmann. We have made it clear in our survey of his understanding of history that Aurobindo has vehemently argued for the reality of the world, giving individuality to every aspect of the universe, in contrast to Sankara, who added a poignancy to his conviction of the unreality of finite things, more specifically, the unreal reality of Maya. As is well known, Sankara categorically denied the reality of the world (jaganmithya). He held that Brahman alone is real and the world is false or illusory. But for Aurobindo every individual must have the same rhythm of significance as the cosmic life. This, indeed, springs from his view of Reality which for him is neither the One nor the many, but One in, through and beyond the many. His teaching is that we have to emerge from this mental narrowness which declares that "the One is the reality, the Many are an illusion"<sup>1</sup> into "the supramental play or the truth of Maya where the "each" and the "all" co-exist in the inseparable unity of the one truth and the multiple symbol".<sup>2</sup> He maintains throughout that freedom is to be won within the world.

It is against this background that he develops his own view of history. As referred to earlier, he writes: "In our present life of Nature, in our externalized existence, it is the world that seems to create us; but in the turn to the

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1.) The Life Divine I, p. 54 and p. 175.

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spiritual life it is we who must create ourselves and our world". "At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny; ....".<sup>1</sup> This shows that Aurobindo seeks to lay the ground work for an understanding of history with a strong sense of crisis on the part of the individual.

As we have seen, Bultmann sees man primarily, if not exclusively, as one standing before God in his subjectivity. He holds that God's claim goes out to man and in order to achieve the unity of his being man must turn to God in response to God's claim on him. In his attempt to give an infinite importance to one's historical decisions Bultmann affirms that "genuine historicity means to live in responsibility and history is a call to historicity".<sup>2</sup> It is, therefore, imperative for Bultmann to develop a historical method on the basis of the individual's historicity. As earlier referred to, for him, "history now gains the meaning of responsibility over against the future, which is at the same time the responsibility over against the heritage of the past in face of the future".<sup>3</sup> In this direction he goes one step further by indicating that the righteousness of God must be understood in terms of the individual's historicity. He observes: Righteousness becomes "the essence of salvation". It has its origin in God's transcendent "grace which is his eschatological

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1. The Life Divine II, pp. 1108, 1159.

2. History and Eschatology, p. 136.

3. Ibid., p. 143.

deed". "Every "cosmic" dimension - i.e. in reality, historic dimension "has" a locus in the actual living of men, which is true "history"". <sup>1</sup>

When we look at the above statements of these two writers we can perhaps discern a possible similarity between their understanding of history. Aurobindo's position displays an intense feeling of crisis on part of the individual. This is strikingly parallel to Bultmann's characteristic emphasis on "the actual living of men which is true history". As is well known, Bultmann was originally involved in the theology of crisis school.

In Bultmann's view, the historical decisions of individuals make up history and in the words of Gogarten "these decisions are such that they do not reach beyond history in order to secure criteria and standards from a super-reality about it". <sup>2</sup> This implies that personal history is thought to be almost the unalterable centre of reference to the understanding of cosmic history. This view of history, in Bultmann's language, is a key to the most comprehensive understanding of Paul's anthropology. He opposes the classical Christian concept of history understood in terms of God's history on two counts:

I) In Heilsgeschichte general history historie and personal history are too easily identified. The sense of Historie as Heilsgeschichte cannot be maintained because the action of God is not rationally intelligible and demonstrable. Hence,

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1. Th. N.T. I, pp. 271 f. 289, 305.

2. F. Gogarten, "Theology and History", Journal for Theology and the Church, Vol. Four (1967), p. 38.

Bultmann vehemently argues for Geschichte, i.e. "real history" in which God encounters man. II) He sees the solution to the problem of Heilsgeschichte (history as having an eschatological goal) in Geschichte implying the "now" of decision for the individual. Within this scheme of thinking, 'philosophy of existence' is viewed as having primary authority and by its definition of human possibilities it turns theology into anthropology which focuses upon the reality and truth of human existence. We are then left with the conclusion that Bultmann's view of concrete human existence prevents him from ever making room for a genuinely theological concept of reality and God's revelation in history since the latter is a counterpart of the idea of God's dealings with the world. (This view is essentially the lynch-pin of the framework of Barthian theology and Bultmann finds it hard to accept). Moreover, the idea of God's dealings with the world is basic to Paul's theology which, within its frame of reference of anthropology, Christology, ecclesiology, and the cosmic perspective brought a transformation of Israel's understanding of man's relation to God.

One can take exception to Bultmann's view by saying that the relation of God to the reality of the world cannot be conclusively explained by a single principle of "encounter" in the kerygma. As Long explains, what Jaspers argues is that "at the limits of the knowledge of objects and the self who is the subject of knowledge, man comes up against a boundary, the limit of human understanding, and here he flounders. At this limit, the manifestation of transcendent Being is possi-

ble".<sup>1</sup> Bultmann however, does not deny the general knowledge of God given in creation. But this type of knowledge is only subsidiary as seen from the perspective of revelation in the Christ-event. He thus holds that "there is therefore revealed in creation that knowledge about God which is given to man in his knowledge concerning his own existence. If he would keep this knowledge thoroughly open, ..... then creation would speak as God's word for him. But, in fact, man just does not do this: he twists this negative knowledge into a positive knowledge, and so creation becomes mute for him ....."<sup>2</sup> Obviously, there is a Pauline note here but it seems to me that Bultmann is perhaps overstating the sinfulness of man. His contention is: "Only to the man who is aware of his creatureliness does God speak in history".<sup>3</sup>

One can admit that the world is not self-explanatory, but Bultmann insists on man being unable to allow the creation to speak as God's Word. And for him, the idea of 'encounter' becomes a formal criterion for his theory of 'revelation theology'. He asserts: "Gone is the relation of man to the transcendent as that which stands over against man and the world and is not at their disposal, which is manifested only through encounter, ....."<sup>4</sup> He therefore concentrates on phenomenological categories like "attitudes", "feelings",

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1. E.T. Long, Jaspers and Bultmann, pp. 35.

2. Essays, pp. 114-15.

3. Ibid., p. 117.

4. Rudolf Bultmann, "The Idea of God and Modern Man", Journal for Theology and the Church, Vol. Two. (1965), p. 89.



"trust" and "risk" based on personal relations. God's revelation for him is fundamentally "an occurrence" or "an event" in the individual. He firmly believes that these are the only "observable realities" of human personality. It seems to me that he is often right in what he writes and often wrong in what he forgets. To be more precise, he often writes about the unquestionable reality of these phenomenological events but often forgets to take into account the effects of the reality of one's consciousness which is part of the human being. What about the role of consciousness which the human being possesses and by means of which he recognizes the measure of his moral personality? What about God's working in the inner consciousness of man? The very high degree of consciousness which a human being possesses is in itself an evidence of his personality. It is perhaps in this sense that Jasper's idea of revelation becomes more comprehensive than that of Bultmann. Jasper's contention is as Long explains, that "the Offenbarwerden of truth occurs in an inner act of man in which he becomes aware of the true possibilities of his being and his relation to Transcendence".<sup>1</sup> However, Bultmann has little sympathy for this view. Moltmann observes that "an immediate self-consciousness and a non-dialectical identity with himself is not possible to man - that is shown precisely by the dialectical antithesis of world and self in Bultmann".<sup>2</sup> Of course, the concept of consciousness and its

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1. E.T. Long, op. cit., p. 34.

2. Jürgen Moltmann, op. cit., p. 67.

relation to language is another major issue and it is not part of my plan in this thesis to go into a full discussion of it.

Let us now consider Aurobindo's concept of 'gnostic' being and the community in relation to Bultmann's understanding of one's authentic life and community. Aurobindo points out that there is no selfish ego in the 'gnostic' being whose life is characterized by such qualities as those of the true Yogin of the Gītā. His 'gnostic' being is not the Superman of Nietzsche; rather the true superman is one who has not only divine power but also divine love and divine wisdom. For him, "To evolve in the sense of God is to grow in intuition, in light, in joy, in love, in service; ....."<sup>1</sup> "The liberated soul extends its perception of unity horizontally as well as vertically. Its unity with the transcendent One is incomplete without its unity with the cosmic Many".<sup>2</sup> The first of these statements reflects a type of terminology peculiar to a Hindu theologian and at the same time spells out something of the depth of the meaning of "man coming to one's self". Aurobindo does not make clear how this is possible except to show that this state of one's being is the eventual outcome of the meeting of divine power and man's unreserved surrender. This inevitably leads us to consider some of Bultmann's statements expressing his idea of authentic existence. Perhaps the most lasting impression Bultmann leaves is that however much he adopts Heidegger's philosophy of existence he repeatedly stresses the

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1. Sri Aurobindo, The Superman (Pondicherry, 1950), pp. 4 - 5.

2. The Life Divine I, p. 62.

point that man receives "genuineness of life" only as a gift. This indicates that in his characteristic emphasis on the transformation of the individual, understood in terms of divine power and man's surrender, Aurobindo's idea of true freedom comes close to that of Bultmann, only Aurobindo does not use terms like God's gift or God's grace.

In his explanation of the concept of the Christian Community Bultmann points out "the union of believers into one soma with Christ ..... has its basis not in their sharing the same supernatural substance, but in the fact that in the word of proclamation Christ's death-and-resurrection becomes a possibility of existence in regard to which a decision must be made, .....".<sup>1</sup> He goes on to say that "it [church] is the eschatological Congregation, and hence its existing belongs to the eschatological salvation - occurrence". "To be "in Christ" is also to be "of Christ" - i.e. to belong to Christ as one's Lord (cf. Gal. 3:29 with 3:27; 5:24; II Cor. 10:7; Rom. 8:9; 14:8)"..... "the lordship of the Lord is set up over believers and acknowledged by them".<sup>2</sup> So for Bultmann the underlying doctrinal formulation is: "The lordship of the Lord is set up over believers and acknowledged by them". Elsewhere he observes: "It is the paradox of Christian being that the believer is taken out of the world and exists, so to speak, as unworldly and that at the same time he remains within the world, .....".<sup>3</sup>

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1. Th. N.T. I, p. 302.

2. Ibid., pp. 308, 312, 314.

3. History and Eschatology, p. 152.

Two important inferences can be drawn from these observations: (i) The proclamation of God's salvation deed becomes a decision question: (ii) The important question is: does Bultmann throw any new light on our ethical ideas of human solidarity? The concept of community - the collective experience of the community in terms of its impact on other cosmic phenomena or on each other as members of the same body is given very little attention. In making this second comment we are not suggesting that the members of the Church should sacrifice their own integrity but only that one must discover a relationship of creative tension between the two. For, as Dietrich von Oppen writes: "Living with one another today demands that we respect the secret of the other, that we lovingly make room for him and do that which is necessary. That is what modern 'togetherness' requires of us, and the parallel construction, love God and love your neighbour, says the same thing".<sup>1</sup> I am all for this point of view because we have in this statement a healthy recognition of the truth that we cannot claim to know or love the transcendent unless we know and love our human neighbour. Looked at from this point of view, Bultmann's understanding of the nature and role of the individual in community, for all its merits, cannot claim to have a thorough-going impact on the Church reaching out to the whole troubled world. It is perhaps in this sense that his view of community has come under the scrutiny and criticism of many scholars, even some of his own followers. For instance, E. Käsemann writes:

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1. Dietrich von Oppen, "Man in the Open Situation", *Journal for Theology and the Church*, Vol. Two (1965), p. 148.

"Bultmann's interpretation of faith rouses uneasiness because it seems to end in individualism".<sup>1</sup> Bultmann's concern, of course, is to show that "The new people of God has no real history, for it is community of the end-time, an eschatological phenomenon .....! The consciousness of being the eschatological community is at the same time the consciousness of being taken out of the still existing world ..... Even the Christian command of love is negative in so far as it demands unselfishness but does not set concrete goals of acting".<sup>2</sup> One wonders whether with this scheme of thinking Bultmann does not tend to exaggerate the eschatological element in early Christianity at the expense of Christian community life. This becomes obvious especially when he asserts that the New Testament Church lacks a social programme and concrete goals of action. As compared with this view of the role of the individual in community, we find in Aurobindo's system a rather advanced idea of the ethics of human solidarity. For him, "the true Person is not an isolated entity, his individuality is universal".<sup>3</sup> This suggests that the question whether the existentialist philosophy of life reflects a conceptual tendency towards the togetherness of human society may be answered affirmatively in the case of Aurobindo's view of true selfhood. We can thus safely suggest that Aurobindo's conception of the liberated self within the context of community scores over Bultmann's view of the nature and function of the believer in the Church.

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1. E. Käsemann, Perspectives on Paul, p. 64.

2. History and Eschatology, pp. 36-37, and cf. also p. 152.

3. The Life Divine II, p. 1036.

E. Comparison of Vivekananda's understanding of anthropology with that of Bultmann:

In our survey of Vivekananda's system of ideas in the preceding chapter we discovered that his usual position was that the finite is not a mere dream but a real form of the Absolute - the relative reality of the world and of human life is a dominant feature of his religious thought. He advocates the idea that man represents the principle of freedom in its highest form. He declares: "The original impulse as well as the end to be achieved is the same for Science and Religion - it is Freedom".<sup>1</sup> For him, man's freedom distinguishes him from the rest of the world in so far as man's struggle for freedom is conducted consciously and intelligently. Moreover, his conception of God obviously differs from the Vedantic teaching of God. "I never read a more beautiful conception of God than this", he says, "He is the Great Poet, the Ancient One. The whole universe is his poem, written in infinite bliss".<sup>2</sup> His watchword is: Reinterpret the old truths according to the needs of the times and make them dynamic once again. He therefore points out that "knowledge of the Vedanta has been hidden too long in caves and forests. It has been given to me to rescue it from its seclusion and to carry it in the midst of family and social life .....".<sup>3</sup> Vivekananda affirms: "I cannot believe in a religion that does not wipe out the widows'

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1. As quoted by V.S. Naravane, Modern Indian Thought, pp. 103-4.

2. As quoted by Naravane, op. cit., p. 88.

3. As quoted by V.S. Naravane, op. cit., pp. 89-90.



tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth".<sup>1</sup> He writes: "May I be born and reborn again, and suffer a thousand miseries, if only I am able to worship the only God, in whom I believe, the sum-total of all souls, and above all my God the wicked, my God the afflicted, my God the poor of all the races !...."<sup>2</sup> His burning passion for religion is expressed in these words: "'The abstract Advaita' must become living-poetic - in our everyday life; out of the hopelessly intricate mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering Yogism must come the most scientific and practical psychology".<sup>3</sup>

It is from this view of religion that he developed his own philosophy of history. He expressed a need for a school of Indian historians steeped in modern scientific methods. He maintained that "the actual should be reconciled to the ideal. The present life should be made to coincide with life eternal".<sup>4</sup> For him, as referred to earlier "Truth does not pay homage to any society ancient or modern, society has to pay homage to it or die".<sup>5</sup> This perhaps comes close to Kierkegaard's understanding of truth and Heidegger's concept of Being. The emphasis of Kierkegaard is that truth has no reality except in the

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1. As quoted by G. Ashe, Gandhi: A Study in Revolution (London, 1968), p. 131.

2. As quoted by Romain Rolland, Prophets of the New India, p. 250.

3. Lecture at Harvard University, March 25, 1896, cited by V.S. Naravane, op. cit., p. 90.

4. Practical Vedanta, p. 11, Part 1 (The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda II, pp. 291-308).

5. As quoted in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 344.

existence of men. His dictum is: "Where the eternal is concerned there is only one time: the present".<sup>1</sup> Heidegger affirms: "That Being itself and how Being itself concerns our thinking does not depend upon our thinking alone. That Being itself, and the manner in which Being itself, strikes a man's thinking, that rouses his thinking and stirs it to rise from Being itself to respond and corresponds to Being as such".<sup>2</sup>

This obviously leads us to compare Vivekananda's position to that of Bultmann. For Bultmann the idea of man's relation to God "is manifested only through encounter, only as gift, and cannot be reached by turning away from the world in a religious flight into a beyond".<sup>3</sup> Bultmann explains elsewhere the difference between Gogarten's and Heidegger's view of history.<sup>4</sup> What he says of history himself is as follows: "Now doubtless the man who has death in view resolves upon a possibility of his existence; but the resolve is a resolve of despair and the possibility is always only the one possibility of being what he already is ..... Faith is from the outset an ontological possibility of man that appears in the resolve of despair. It is this that makes it possible for man to understand when he is encountered by the kerygma".<sup>5</sup> But how does Bultmann

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1. As quoted by Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 51.

2. As quoted by James G. Williams, "Possibility in Principle and Possibility in Fact: A Criticism of Bultmann's Distinction", The Journal of Bible and Religion, Vol. XXXIII (1965), p. 325.

3. Rudolf Bultmann, "The Idea of God and Modern Man", Journal for Theology and the Church, Vol. Two (1965), p. 89.

4. See Existence and Faith, pp. 103-108.

5. Existence and Faith, p. 108.

relate this faith-event to the transcendent Being? In Bultmann's thought two ideas are intertwined, namely the word as the eternal thou and the coming together of the present and the past as one in faith's response to the proclamation of the Christian Church.

One must admit that Bultmann puts his finger on a real problem of relating the eternal to the temporal which is the crucial issue of the philosophy of religion and his solution to the problem lies in his 'kerygmatic theology'. This issue was perhaps also the stimulus for Vivekananda but his way of tackling the issue is obviously different from that of Bultmann in that he sees a "genuineness of life" as a potentiality within man rather than response to the proclamation. All this seems highly ingenious as a radical challenge to the traditional idealistic understanding of the connection between noumenon and phenomenon, be it of classical Christianity or of Vedantism in Indian philosophy.

But the question still remains whether in this solution the aspect of divine being and action is left unexplained. That is, does this existential interpretation of one's religious experience leave any room for the being and action of God outside the individual's own direct experience? If God were to be known indirectly as he was reflected in the changes of man's self-understanding, would this not be the denial of theology and the substitution of anthropology in its place? Does not Bultmann often seem to reduce talk about God to talk about God-produced conditions in us? Theology in the proper

sense of the term requires more of a conceptual clarification of the divine being than of his power. It is important to recall a more balanced statement of Käsemann when he writes: "The righteousness of God is precisely what, as the power of the justification of the ungodly, it must be - God's victory amid the opposition of the world".<sup>1</sup> Bultmann's contention is that a neutral statement cannot speak of God as he is for me in my concrete existence. Schmithals characterizes Bultmann's understanding of God as follows: "God is reality for me only as a reality which encounters me".<sup>2</sup> This is perhaps the strength of Bultmann's existentialist theology. But his position seems to fall short of a more definite language about God. If, on the other hand, Bultmann insists on the nature of God as wholly "other-wordly" is he not calling for a position wherein philosophy and theology remain essentially unrelated to each other? It is this point of view of Bultmann which arouses embarrassment among scholars who are less sympathetic with his position. Those who differ from him seek to supplement his restriction on language of God with a more definite ontology.

Another important theme of Vivekananda's system concerns the nature and role of the individual in the community. Vivekananda's attempt was to give the utmost importance to the theory of practical Vedanta. We have made it clear in the previous chapter how his teaching on the subject of human service con-

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1. E. Käsemann, New Testament Questions of Today, p. 180.

2. W. Schmithals, An Introduction to the Theology of Rudolf Bultmann, p. 34.

stituted a challenge to the nation of India which needed a great deal of awakening for the uplifting of society. Moreover, the traditional understanding of the idea of self-realization through self-abnegation gained a new meaning in the teaching and efforts of Vivekananda. The positive significance of the order of the Ramakrishna Math (monastery) and Mission could be seen in its attempt to promote a double purpose of life - salvation of one's own soul and the good of the world. By his teaching of practical Vedanta Vivekananda made a sustained and honest effort to remove the criticism of the west against Hinduism as being unconcerned with the problem of social inequality and lacking in social ethics. He has persistently pursued the course of relating its ancient beliefs to the needs of the times and delivering people from superstitions and ignorance. He was keenly alive to the need of helping to give bread to the needy and poor and human dignity to the oppressed and the outcast. He has not only done a signal service by instilling an impetus in the intelligentsia of India to embark on social service but he has also made a most forcible appeal for human love and service. It is in this sense that his teaching on the nature and role of the liberated person within the context of community has become far more pertinent and made a more profound impact on people in India than that of any other "neo-orthodox" Hindu writer.

Bultmann's teaching on the authentic existence of the individual touches more on the inwardizing of one's own religious experience. As we have already seen, his consistent emphasis

on one's historic decisions and possibilities of his being gives us the impression that the collective experience of community is given a secondary place in the scale of priorities as seen from the perspective of the meaning of human existence.

It is to be observed that evidence applicable to any one dimension of experience is not final except in relation to other dimensions. That is, man is not only responsible to God but he is also responsible, as M. Scheler says, "for everything of moral bearing in the character and proceedings of the larger corporate selves of which he is an integral part".<sup>1</sup> Given this assumption the community life is but an indispensable element in the total context of man's situation in the world.

To conclude this chapter it is necessary for us now to recapitulate our argument and draw its threads together. In Bultmann's project of demythologizing of the message of the New Testament four of his basic presuppositions came more into view, namely his understanding of Transcendence, human freedom, 'personal history' and self-understanding. More to the point is his 'kerygmatic theology' with which we shall presently occupy ourselves. In the first place it is to be observed that we have to a large extent focused attention on the subject of how these four aspects of his existentialist theology appear to have been foreshadowed in modern Indian thought. That is, we have reached the conclusion supported by evidence that all

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1. Max Scheler, On the Eternal in Man, tr. Bernard Noble (London, 1960), p. 376.



five modern Hindu thinkers whom we have selected for the purpose of comparison with Bultmann, have without exception taken account of Western philosophy and culture, more specifically Western Christian thought in attempting to relate their traditional dogmas to the religious needs of the times. Hence it is not surprising that their interpretation of the time-hallowed tenets of their religion is characterized by certain new trends of religious thought. This is seen in their affirmation of the idea of regeneration and renunciation in place of self-realization, 'personal history' as over against the cyclic moment of time, transcendence in terms of humanity or human existence as over-shadowing the age-long concept of Brahman as it is in itself and so on. These new trends, as we have tried to argue in this chapter, may well be compared with the basic presuppositions of Bultmann's existentialist theology, except that as a theologian of the Lutheran evangelical tradition Bultmann holds fast to 'kerygmatic theology'.

In our analysis of Bultmann's theology we have time and again alluded to the fact that Bultmann is diametrically opposed to the objective and speculative knowledge of God. The main-spring of his concern is to conclusively assert the dialectic of kerygma and history, of faith and knowledge. He is at pains to show that proclamation is authenticated only in the moment of revelation itself in which the believer becomes a new creature in Christ.<sup>1</sup> For him, "The preaching is itself

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1. cf. Essays, p. 18.

revelation and does not merely speak about it, ....."<sup>1</sup> He affirms: "Then there is indeed a knowledge that is also given in revelation, ..... Thus it is not an observer's knowledge, ..... but rather a knowledge that is only opened up to me in laying hold of the possibility for understanding myself that is disclosed in the proclamation; .....".<sup>2</sup> It is from this axiom that he concludes that "Paul's conversion involved the abandonment of his previous understanding of himself .....".<sup>3</sup> The merit of his theology is that from the standpoint of revelation theology he stresses with freshness of a new discovery of the concept of self-understanding. One cannot but be impressed by this new discovery.

In the light of this appreciative comment on Bultmann's theology the question which we now have to clarify is whether the anthropology of Bultmann and modern Indian thought can be considered as the right clue to the understanding of one's religious experience. In his book, Modern Indian Thought, V.S. Naravane devoted one full chapter to the background and characteristics of the same subject. In it he made an overall evaluation of the various forces which he thought had been influencing Hinduism across the centuries, namely Islam, Western science and education and Christianity. The period between the beginning of the nineteenth century and the middle of the twentieth century, which is considered to be the period

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1. Existence and Faith, p. 78.

2. Ibid., p. 88.

3. Th. N.T. I, p. 188.

of modern Indian thought, was designated by him as "one of the most eventful and complicated epochs in history". He adds: "....., in spite of the interplay of forces that was going on in a complex age, Indian thought could not have achieved what it did if a number of extraordinary personalities had not emerged. The story of modern Indian thought is the story of a long line of powerful thinkers blessed with unusual creative and speculative talent".<sup>1</sup>

The thought of the principal personalities of this period we have closely examined in comparison with Bultmann's anthropology and while doing so we have repeatedly emphasized how these men have to some extent side-stepped their traditional Hindu thought and clearly and boldly advocated the idea that tradition must continually be re-assessed in the light of fresh experiences. Almost all of these writers' works were marked by a shift in emphasis toward the man-ward aspect of religion, hence the emphasis on divine operation in one's self-surrender to his Creator was significantly absent from their works. That is, in common with traditional Hinduism they underemphasized the idea of God as acting in history. In Bultmann's theology there is no importance given to the conceptual thinking of the Judeo-Christian tradition which views the world of common experience with its changing events as the arena of God's activity, to be more precise, the Heilsgeschichte. The idea that God acts in history is perhaps built into the very make-up of the whole Jewish heritage of thought.

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1. V.S. Naravane, Modern Indian Thought, pp. 4, 19.

This conceptuality is seriously questioned and thrown overboard by Bultmann who maintains that it is expressed in full-blown mythological terms. Moreover, from the standpoint of the religio-historical school he cannot admit of the assumption that God breaks through the closed connection of wordly events. Hence he is determined to exclude from his theology the talk of God as acting in history. Just as modern Indian thought, in keeping with traditional Hinduism, underemphasizes God's act in the individual's decision for God, Bultmann also seems to underemphasize divine operation in the individual's act of faith as he maintains that "Now it is either/or! Now the question is whether a man really wants God and His kingdom or the world and its goods; and the decision must be made radically".<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere Bultmann affirms: "In every moment slumbers the possibility of being the eschatological moment. You must awaken it".<sup>2</sup> Notice - "You must awaken it" not God or the Spirit. Nonetheless, Bultmann goes a step further than Heidegger by extending the idea of the "possibilities" of human life to the "eschatological" (eschatologisch) which may perhaps explain at least his intention to speak of the work of God as it confronts the individual with an ultimate either/or. And he claims that this confrontation is actuated in the preaching of the Church which opens up a real possibility of the hearer's self-understanding. But the question is whether Bultmann, by his belief in a divine event making itself known

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament as quoted in Religion in a Secular Age, p. 113.

2. History and Eschatology, p. 155.

to Dasein, has not opened himself to the charge that R. Prenter has made: "The idea that man only receives his own existence by a gift is just as mythological as that of breathing a pneuma into the depths of the soul".<sup>1</sup> To put this differently, Oliver observes that "Bultmann's insistence that the kerygma alone provides the possibility of overcoming Verfallenheit was regarded by Buri as an unwarranted attachment to myth which breaks off conversation between theology and philosophy".<sup>2</sup>

Apart from this charge against him it must be said that in his overemphasis on revelation theology (i.e. his adherence to the kerygma as the sine qua non of authentic existence) Bultmann underemphasizes God's acting in the world, i.e. creation. But how are we to explain divine activity in the world? Perhaps this question was clarified long ago in Thomism according to which God acts on his creatures in accordance with the nature of each.<sup>3</sup> And this talk of God as acting in the individual's act of faith is an important aspect of the philosophy of religion or of one's religious experience which is notably lacking in Bultmann's theology. Further, this comparative study brings into clear focus the important fact that "just as Bultmann's Christian anthropological thinking highlighted the concept of self-understand-

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1. As quoted by L. Malevez, S.J., The Christian Message and Myth: The Theology of Rudolf Bultmann, tr. Olive Wyon (London, 1958), p. 149.

2. H.H. Oliver, "Fritz Buri: A Chronology of His Theologizing", The Journal of Bible and Religion, Vol. XXXIV (1966), p. 349.

3. cf. Thomas Aquinas, The Summa Theologica Part I. Third Number (London, 1912), p. 400.

ing of the individual" so too some recent Hindu theologians have admirably insisted on the true knowledge of the self as against the classical Hindu idea of the merging of the soul in the ultimate reality in the state of Samadhi, which by its very nature afforded no incentive to this new dimension of life. Both Tagore and Aurobindo have been adept at showing us that the true knowledge of the self is the eventual outcome of his transition from the inauthentic to the authentic existence. The following quotation will make Tagore's viewpoint of self-understanding clear: "..... he [Brahman] can be known by joy, by love. For joy is knowledge in its completeness, it is knowing by our whole being. Intellect sets us apart from the things to be known, but love knows its object by fusion. Such knowledge is immediate and admits no doubt. It is the same as knowing our own selves, only more so".<sup>1</sup>

For Aurobindo, "the Truth is not that God moves round the ego and its view of dualities, but that the Divine is itself the centre and that the experience of the individual only finds its true truth when it is known in the terms of the universal and the transcendent".<sup>2</sup> These statements of modern Hindu theologians are perhaps not dissimilar to Bultmann's statement: ".....; faith is understood only when the man understands himself anew in it".<sup>3</sup> All this only proves how close

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1. Sadhana, p. 159.

2. The Life Divine I, p. 81.

3. Faith and Understanding I, p. 316.



the concept of self-understanding as one of the dominant themes of the anthropology of renascent Hinduism comes to that of Bultmann. This is certainly convincing. It is, however, possible to argue that insistence on the self-understanding of the individual is correct only if it is said with equal emphasis that in authentic existence man also understands God anew. Paul's understanding of God in Christ bears witness to this, cf. II Cor. 5:19. If the anthropology of both Bultmann and that of modern Hindu thought plays down the aspect of understanding God anew in religious experience it follows that both schools of thought heavily draw upon a more highly developed level of anthropological philosophy of religion.

#### CHAPTER IV

##### Apologetic Conclusions: The Relevance of the Pauline understanding of the God-man relationship to the anthropology of recent Indian thought.

The purpose of this chapter is, in the main, to show the relevance of Paul's anthropology to the dominant tendencies in recent Hindu theology and thereby explicate some guide-lines to take Indian Christian theology a step further. On the one hand, from the standpoint of the contemporary Indian Christian theology it is necessary for us to take account of one important recent development. That is, there have emerged valuable studies made by Dr. R.H.S. Boyd and Dr. M.M. Thomas<sup>1</sup> who made available particularly to the public in the West the distinctive style of Indian Christian theology and the ferment of change in actual Indian thought today. To be more precise, on Dr. Thomas' account, modern Hindu theologians attempted to interpret and evaluate Christ and Christianity within the framework of Neo-Vedantism. On the other hand, from the viewpoint of modern Hindu thought it is probably correct to say, as Schiff remarks that "many modern Hindus would deny that they are pantheistic".<sup>2</sup> If that observation is correct then modern Hindu thinkers must have developed a new understanding of God and of the relation of God to the world.

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1. R.H.S. Boyd, An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology; M.M. Thomas, The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance.

2. Leonard M. Schiff, "Book Reviews", *Theology*, Vol.LXVIII (1965), p. 447.

Hence here we address ourselves to investigate (i) their new understanding of God, (ii) their notions as to the way of access to God, viz. their idea of the God-man relationship and (iii) their concept of history and show the relevance of Paul's anthropology to such new trends in recent Indian thinking.

But before we go into the discussion of the subject proper it may well be necessary for us to deal with two preliminary, yet important themes from an Indian context, namely the interfaith encounter and dialogue and the idea of ~~sub~~-transcendence of the individual.<sup>1</sup> The former has become a live topic today in the Indian Church context. This inversely turns upon the missionary apologetic which the Christian Church must continually reinterpret. J.N. Farquhar meant by apologetic, "a criticism that will set Christianity clearly and distinctly in its relation to the other faiths".<sup>3</sup> What was this relation

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1. The idea of sub-transcendence of the individual is one of the deep-rooted dogmas of Hinduism, classical and modern. The votaries of the Hindu faith hold fast to the idea that the religious life requires self-discipline and self-purification. The meaning of one's life is to evoke that Divinity within him. Salvation is an attainment through one's own self-disciplined efforts and it can never be ~~appropriated~~ <sup>as the gift of grace given by God to man</sup>. The most important thinkers of modern Hinduism too repeatedly say that to them the primary goal of all their religious efforts is God-realization. The following statement of Radhakrishnan distinctly expresses such popular notion of one's religious experience: "We can realize the potentialities of spirit only by a process of moral asceticism which gradually shapes the soul into harmony with the invisible realities".<sup>2</sup>
  2. S. Radhakrishnan, "The Spirit in man" in Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 270.
  3. As quoted by David Cairns, "Protestant Missionary Thought in India", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 19 (1966) p. 343.

to be? As Farquhar understood, it was that of fulfilment. But of late, it has been argued by some that <sup>the</sup> theological meaning of mission must, of necessity, obtain a new form or dimension in the light of the emerging nationalism and religious renaissance which have made significant headway in India in particular.

It is probably correct to say that it is this situation to which the Christian Church in India has become sensitive and begun to evolve a new understanding of mission which neither betrays the commitment of the Christian nor exploits the confidence and reality of the power of traditional religion like Hinduism in its nascent form. Understood from this angle, the relevance of J.N. Farquhar's approach to prove that Christ was "the crown of Hinduism" was perhaps rightly called into question.

While the new move among men of other faiths points to the idea that we have to understand each other before we try to put each other right the move among the leaders of Christian Church of both traditions, i.e. Roman Catholic and Protestant in India, is that the Church should continue an interfaith dialogue. Dr. Klaus Klostermaier of Roman Catholic Church observes that "'dialogue" in the sense of sympathetic discussion of religious topics and as an attempt to gain insight into one another's religious traditions tends to concentrate on certain topics which come up almost in every discussion between Hindus and Christians". "Whenever dialogue reaches some depth it was not a question of Christian versus Non-Christian but a common

quest for more truth, more light, more insight".<sup>1</sup> This new trend is perhaps due to the spirited response to the claims of Hindu theologians who are conscious of the individuality of their religious tradition and convinced today that Hinduism is indeed the religion for mankind. Modern Hindu theologians further claim that Hinduism would be the same popular faith, but reinterpreted, cleansed of superstition, and imbued with a social consciousness. It is pertinent to recall what Nehru writes of Hinduism: "Hinduism, as a faith is vague, amorphous, many sided, all things to all men ..... In its present form, and even in the past, it embraces many beliefs and practices, from the highest to the lowest, ..... Its essential spirit seems to be to live and let live".<sup>2</sup>

This reflects one group's concept of their religion. There is another group of intellectuals like Vivekananda, M.K. Gandhi and S. Radhakrishnan. Vivekananda argued that "Vedanta, and Vedanta alone can become the universal religion of man, and that no other religion is fitted for that role".<sup>3</sup> Radhakrishnan writes: "An extensive application of the principle of liberty, equality, and fraternity has made Hinduism the most elastic of all religions, the most capable of adapting itself to new conditions".<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, more striking is

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1. Klaus Klostermaier, "Hindu-Christian Dialogue", *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Volume 5 (1968), pp. 30, 33.
  2. Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India, Second ed. (1947, London), p. 52.
  3. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda III, 8th ed. (Calcutta, 1960), p. 182 cited in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 311.
  4. S. Radhakrishnan, Eastern Religions and Western Thought, p. 338.

their insistence that all religions are basically the same. Radhakrishnan's characteristic phrase is: The essential oneness of all religions. Seen from this perspective, viz. a mature, sophisticated and revitalized religious tradition of recent Hindu theologians, Hendrik Kraemer's idea that the relation between the Christian Faith and the Religions is one of absolute discontinuity has also come in for criticism, however much credit was given to him for his insight into the prophetic apprehension of Biblical Realism.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to recall that with the spirit of the times W.F. Hocking, author of Living Religions and a World Faith, "favoured a policy of co-operation with other religions".<sup>3</sup> Perhaps Hocking took the discussion, namely the question of the relation of religions a step further by "looking for a world faith that would transcend Christianity along with other religions, although in the meantime he regarded Christianity

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1. Dr. Hendrik Kraemer held that there are three great representative apprehensions of life: a) the rational apprehension of the Greeks reflected in Western civilization; b) the prophetic apprehension of Biblical Realism; and c) the primitive apprehension of the totality of existence. By Biblical Realism Kraemer meant the divine revelation, entirely given and sui generis. He affirmed: "It [the Christian revelation] asserts itself as the record of God's self-disclosing and recreating revelation in Jesus Christ, as an apprehension of existence that revolves around the poles of divine judgment and divine salvation, giving the divine answer to this demonic and guilty disharmony of man and the world".<sup>2</sup>

2. Hendrik Kraemer, The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World (London, 1938), pp. 113-14.

3. J.W. Grant, God's People in India (Toronto, 1959), p. 73.



as the nearest to truth of all religions".<sup>1</sup> It is now generally admitted that this new attitude to other religions is perhaps the pointer in the direction towards more enthusiastic steps which <sup>the</sup> Christian Church in India is taking to promote the dialogue between Christian leaders and the intellectuals of Non-Christian religions. The guiding principle in this new project is, as S.J. Samartha puts it, that "we must now be less concerned with our "separateness" or even "distinctness" than with our mutual involvement".<sup>2</sup> This is given added urgency by the fact that the Church in India in carrying its mission is faced with a new reality of an increased Hindu self-consciousness. In their studies both Boyd and Thomas brought to light how exactly the stream of Indian Christian theologians tried to grapple with the issue of presenting the scandal of Christian particularity more meaningfully to the Hindu intellectuals. Some of the Indian Christian theologians are Bishop A.J. Appasamy (b. 1891- ) P. Chenchiah (1886-1959), V. Chakkarai (1888-1958), P.D. Devanandan (1900-1962) and the contemporary Indian Christian thinkers like Surjit Singh, Mark Sundararao, Bishop Kulandran and so on.

In his book, Christianity As Bhakti-Mārga (the path of devotion) Dr. Appasamy set himself to explicate how best can converge the Bhaktimarga of the Gītā which "has become the most popular, widely memorized, authoritative statement of the basic guiding principles of Indian religious life"<sup>3</sup> and <sup>the</sup> Christian doctrine of love as found in Johannine literature. His argu-

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1. J.W. Grant, God's People in India (Toronto, 1959), p. 74.

2. S.J. Samartha, "More than an Encounter of Commitments" in Living Faiths and the Ecumenical Movement, ed. S.J. Samartha (Geneva, 1971), p. 105.

3. H. Zimmer, Philosophies of India, ed. J. Campbell (London, 1951), p. 380.

ment goes briefly as follows: "The modern Christian in India has to recognize that there are elements in the ancient Scriptures of India which have to be fearlessly given up. But there are also many doctrines and ideals in them which have to be zealously assimilated and carried on to their natural culmination in Christ".<sup>1</sup>

Chenchiah gave an entirely new twist to the understanding of the relation of Christianity to Hinduism. He was a forerunner of Raymond Panikkar whose line of approach to this subject will be explained presently, <sup>and</sup> who advanced the idea that the message of the Gospel can strike root in India if it is explained as a new creation of old, viz. Hinduism. He observed: "In Jesus God created the new man: in Hinduism God is sought for perfecting the old man ..... Hinduism makes the perfect man, Christianity the new Man ..... Jesus is the first fruits of a new creation, Hinduism the final fruits of the old creation".<sup>2</sup> In the same vein, Raymond Panikkar concludes that "That Christ which is already in Hinduism, ..... that Christ has not unveiled his whole face, has not yet completed his mission there... ..., he still has to be crucified there, dying with Hinduism as he died with Judaism and with the Hellenistic religions in order to rise again, as the same Christ (.....), but then as a risen Hinduism, as Christianity".<sup>3</sup> Chakkarai takes the same line as that of Chenchiah in that he points out that Hin-

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1. A.J. Appasamy, Christianity As Bhakti-Mārga: A study of the Johannine doctrine of love (Madras, 1930), p. 165.

2. As cited by R.H.S. Boyd, op. cit., p. 163.

3. Raymond Panikkar, The Unknown Christ of Hinduism (London, 1964), p. 17.

duism has been preparing hearts for Christ and grants that salvation may be found within Hinduism. Speaking of how it is possible for both Hindus and Christians to be saved he writes: "The salvation of each, as understood by each, is by the grace of the Lord; the former by the grace of God without the historic Christ, and the other by the grace of God in Christ".<sup>1</sup>

P.D. Devanandan was noted for his vigorous attempt to open a dynamic conversation with the Hindu intellectuals. His characteristic statement is: "We are entering an epoch in world history when religious differences are no longer regarded as fundamentally divisive".<sup>2</sup> The work of the current writers like Surjit Singh and Mark Sundararao are significant in that they look for dialogue with modern Indian thinkers within the framework of Advaita Vedanta.<sup>3</sup>

Such is the mode of Indian Christian theology as far as the apologetics of the Church is concerned. This poses a question: Does this new tide in Indian Christian theology help in such a way that the influence of Church in India could permeate the modern Hindu theological scene? To put this question differently, can this newly evolved method of apologetics through dialogue between Church leaders and the intellectuals

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1. As cited by R.H.S. Boyd, op. cit., p. 184 fn. 1.

2. P.D. Devanandan, "The Christian attitude and approach to Non-Christian Religions", International Review of Missions, Vol.XLI (1952), p. 178.

3. Surjit Singh, Preface to Personality: Christology in relation to Radhakrishnan's Philosophy (Madras, 1952); Mark Sundera Rao, Ananyatva: Realization of Christian Non-duality (Bangalore, 1964).

of India help the votaries of Hinduism to come to terms with the scandal of Christian particularity when they themselves would revitalize Hinduism from within? In point of fact, in Radhakrishnan's writings the plea for a reformed Hinduism is set forth with great clarity and persuasive power. It is not too much of an exaggeration to say that the same outlook of their Hindu faith bulks large also in the writings of Vivekananda and Gandhi. And, what is more, Radhakrishnan who advocates the idea of 'fellowship of faiths' no less interestingly appeals to the Christian apologist to abandon his exclusive claims.

All this may suggest that perhaps this new method of Christian apologetics through dialogue is helpful only to the point of gaining insight into one another's religious traditions and may ultimately fail to get Hindu apologists to come to terms with the Christian apologists because the former are speaking with a greater assurance about their position and heritage than the earlier reformers did. To say this is by no means to deny the considerable value of the dialogue pursued by the Christian theologians of our times in the East. M. Buber rightly observes: "A time of genuine conversations is beginning - [on the basis] not of an identical content of faith which is alleged to be found in all religions, but of the situation, of anguish and of expectation".<sup>1</sup>

This brings us now to the discussion of the theme of sub-trans-

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1. M. Buber, Between Man and Man, pp. 7-8.

cendence of the individual in recent Hinduism. In the foregoing chapter we showed that just as Bultmann maintained the idea that man is not only related to himself but is also responsible for himself so also the recent Hindu theologians advocated the idea that man is totally and solely responsible for himself. This is one main strand of thought of renascent Hinduism. There is another strand as well, viz. the classical Hindu idea of sub-transcendence of the self. That is to say the idea of the soul's upward surge was deeply rooted in the Indian mind. This makes it obvious that while it is significant that recent Hindu theologians' writings contain certain concepts similar to those of Western Existentialism, not surprisingly, their structural presupposition like the idea of lifting of oneself up to the level of God is often displayed in their writings. This tendency perhaps gives the answer to the question why the elite oriented to Western education and influence who became the champions of modern Indian thought did not accept the Gospel. This question is, of course, one of the most puzzling questions confronting the Christian apologist in India today. It is probably correct to say that modern India's outstanding thinkers' Western training has in no way abated their love of Hindu system of thought. Steeped as they are in their own spiritual culture they are preoccupied always with this particular concept of religion.

That this is true of Radhakrishnan's religious thought can be seen from the following passages. While acknowledging his debt to the classical philosophers he says: "My thinking had another source and proceeded from my own experience, which is

not quite the same as what is acquired by mere study and reading. It is born of spiritual experience rather than deduced from logically ascertained premises. Philosophy is produced more by our encounter with reality than by the historical study of such encounters".<sup>1</sup> This is not the whole story of his thought. He also asserts the other aspects of one's religious life. As referred to earlier, he affirms: "The unchanging substance of religion is the evolution of man's consciousness".<sup>2</sup> This makes it clear that for him, the evolution of man's consciousness is the spiritual illumination of which the individual's soul is capable and which the soul realizes itself.

He further explains that "the mandate of religion is that man must make the change in his own nature in order to let the divine in him manifest itself ..... This is the teaching not only of the Upaniṣads and Buddhism but also of the Greek mysteries and Platonism, of the Gospels and the schools of Gnosticism".<sup>3</sup>

All this is sufficient to show how ably Radhakrishnan puts forward the idea that the dogma of sub-transcendence of man is based on a sound understanding of the individual's spiritual realization. And, what is more, he contends that other historical religions had jealously assimilated this idea. With all due respect to him for the range of his informed understanding of the major religions of the world I must confess

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, "Fragments of a Confession" in The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan, p. 10.

2. Ibid., p. 77.

3. Ibid., p. 80.



to the feeling that he has overlooked the fact that this particular notion of his is the central point of difference between his Hindu faith and the Christian faith. For even in the Gospels, man's salvation, his true freedom is thought to be coming from a source outside himself. Man cannot achieve it by himself. The upshot of all this discussion from the standpoint of Radhakrishnan's advocacy of the idea of sub-transcendence of the self is that if one insists on such a notion of the salvation of the individual then he cannot accept as convincing the Christian understanding of salvation as the gift of God's grace to man.

Perhaps it is not too much to say that Radhakrishnan is a conspicuous example of the group who hold to this strand of thought. Tagore writes: "In order to realize his unity with the universal, the individual man must live his perfect life which alone gives him the freedom to transcend it".<sup>1</sup> His understanding of the power of the human soul can be seen from the following passage: "The whole object of man is to free his personality of self into the personality of soul, to turn his inward forces into the forward movement towards the infinite, from the contraction of self in desire into the expansion of soul in love".<sup>2</sup> Two distinct ideas can be discerned in this statement, namely (i) by using the phrase: "to turn the inward forces into the forward movement towards the infinite" Tagore subscribes to the traditional idea of lifting of oneself up to the level of God; (ii) and yet at the same time

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1. The Religion of Man, p. 195.

2. Personality, pp. 97-98.

over against the classical Hindu understanding of the merging of the personal self in an impersonal Being he explains the idea of the spiritual relation of the individual to the Supreme being in personal categories. That is why on purpose he uses the phrase; "from the contraction of self in desire into the expansion of the soul in love". He thus brings more clearly into view the idea of the individual's union with a personal God.

Gandhi's religious teaching of the superior efficacy of 'soul force' also doubtless falls in line with the other recent Hindu theologians' presupposition, i.e. achieving of one's true freedom through self-directed efforts. He observes: "Man is not at peace with himself till he has become like unto God. The endeavour to reach this state is the supreme, the only ambition worth having. And this is self-realization. This self-realization is the subject of the Gita, as it is of all scriptures".<sup>1</sup> Gandhi awakened India to its moral superiority to the West. It would not be too gross an exaggeration to say that national independence has furthered this sense of moral superiority in that Indians should look for guidance to their own heritage rather than to imported principles of religious life. To make matters plainer, there has emerged a dominant idea that the West has nothing extraordinarily spiritual to offer. Seen from this point of view the idea of sub-transcendence of man has an added attractiveness. Without taking into account this religious background of Gandhi not a few of

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1. M.K. Gandhi, Hindu Dharma, p. 142.

Church leaders both in India and in the West had centred their hopes on him that he would some day publicly confess his personal faith of Christ. But they did not understand that Gandhi was prepared to follow Christ but only on his own terms and that he was in fact, as Basham points out, "the real architect of the new Hinduism".<sup>1</sup> So it is beyond doubt that Christianity as a well-defined system of religious thought and action could not appeal to Gandhi to the extent that he could come to terms with the Christian apologists in India. To make the point clear, as long as Gandhi was pre-occupied with the idea of lifting oneself up to the level of God the Christian Gospel could not evoke in him the response of faith in Christ.

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh also subscribed to this strand of thought in neo-Orthodox Hinduism. This can be seen from the following passage: "We have the dissolution of this egoistic construction by the self-opening of the individual to the universe and to God as the means of that supreme fulfilment to which egoistic life is only a prelude even as animal life was only a prelude to the human".<sup>2</sup> From this statement it is not difficult to show that there is embedded in Aurobindo's religious thought the idea of sub-transcendence of the self. In his childhood Aurobindo was entrusted to the care of a clergyman named Drewett in whose home Aurobindo was not only initiated into

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1. A.L. Basham, "Hinduism" in Concise Encyclopaedia of Living Faiths, ed. R.C. Zaehner, (London, 1959), p. 259.

2. The Life Divine. I, p. 90.

Biblical scholarship but was also introduced to the Great English poets. Hence it is beyond doubt that even from his early and formative years of his stay in England Aurobind was oriented towards Western thought and culture and Christian influence. This discussion of Aurobindo's conception of sub-transcendence of man shows that with all this orientation to the Western Christian thought behind him, his thinking was rather conditioned by such a popular notion of one's religious experience.

In Vivekananda's writings also there is this note of sub-transcendence of the self. For him man's moral struggle could be a path towards spiritual liberation. As a student of philosophy and poetry Vivekananda studied all the systems of Western philosophy and was well acquainted with the contemporary philosophy of Herbert Spencer and J.S. Mill. From his characterization of Jesus as 'Jeevanmukta' one gets the impression that he had acquired considerable knowledge of the Christian faith. All this goes to show that Vivekananda never disputed the positive value of Western culture and thought. On the other hand, he made full use of Western philosophy in expounding the Vedanta. In so doing he was concerned to bring to light the importance of the ancient dynamism of the far-off Vedic seers, perhaps with a view to comparing them with Christ. His own words are: "..... Let us therefore find God not only in Jesus of Nazareth but in all the great Ones that have preceded him, in all that came after him, and all that are yet to come ..."<sup>1</sup>

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1. As cited by M.M. Thomas, op. cit., p. 121.

The three essential propositions of the Vedanta are as follows: (i) Man's real nature is divine; (ii) the aim of life is to realize this divine nature; and (iii) all religions are basically the same and lead to the same object. It is the practical application of this philosophy which Vivekananda untiringly stressed. Sarma thinks that Man's goal is to reach "the unutterable perfection of God".<sup>1</sup>

All this suggests that however much the most important thinkers of renascent Hinduism have been oriented towards Western thought and Christian influence they could not persuade themselves that the Gospel could take the place of their spiritual heritage. If one were to ask why this is so it might be said in reply that for the Indian mind the idea of sub-transcendence of the self has considerable attraction. This strand of thought is one of the distinctive emphases of renascent Hinduism of which the Christian apologists in India have to take account. It is notable that modern Hindus are discovering a new sense of history - the datum of human freedom as against the age-long principle of karma, and the importance and relevance of social reform. But there does seem one observation which may not be inapposite here. So long as the intelligentsia of modern India are preoccupied with the revivalism of the traditional idea of lifting oneself up to the level of God by one's own efforts it is surely doubtly difficult for the Christian apologists to strike home the meaning of the Gospel, viz.

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1. As quoted in H. Reinggren and A.V. Ström, Religions of Mankind - Today and Yesterday, ed. J.C.G. Greig, tr. N.L. Jensen, (Edinburgh: London, 1967), p. 343.

"man in his striving to live out of his own resources loses his self, life arises out of surrendering one's self to God, thereby gaining one's self".<sup>1</sup> That this is the fundamental distinction between the scandal of Christian particularity and the Hindu faith scarcely needs further explanation.

Now this brings us to the discussion of the subject proper of this chapter. In the first place we need to know and reckon with the distinctive emphases of the anthropology of modern Indian thought and in the second place we examine them from the Pauline perspective on the God-man relationship as a supplement to the current Indian Christian theology. In addition to the fact that "the pressures of modern nation would have caused something of a crisis in Hinduism",<sup>2</sup> as Leonard M. Schiff observes, the question of man's ultimate destiny has been clarified from the standpoint of a new understanding of God, a new idea of the God-man relationship and a concept of history developed within the framework of recent Indian thought.

#### A. Modern Hindu Theologians' New Understanding of God:

We showed in the second chapter that there has emerged in recent Indian thinking a new understanding of God - the Absolute as "humanized". Tagore protests energetically that those thinkers, both Indian and European, are wrong who "maintain that the Brahman of India is a mere abstraction, a negation

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1. Rudolf Bultmann, Th. N.T. I, p. 270.

2. Leonard M. Schiff, "Book Reviews", Theology, Vol. LXVIII (1965), p. 448.



of all that is in the world", though he admits that "such a doctrine has been and still is prevalent with a section of our countrymen".<sup>1</sup> He declares: "The Infinite in India was not a thin nonentity, void of all content".<sup>2</sup> He can even speak of "the sovereignty of the universal will".<sup>3</sup> He affirms: "It is the self of man which the great King of the universe has not shadowed with his throne - he has left it free. In his physical and mental organism, where man is related with nature, he has to acknowledge the rule of his King, but in his self he is free to disown him. There our God must win his entrance. There he comes as a guest not as a king, and therefore he has to wait till he is invited".<sup>4</sup> For him, "without the world God would be phantasm; without God, the world would be chaos".<sup>5</sup> All these statements obviously reflect Tagore's pointed expression to a theistic concept of religion. Further, it may also be safely asserted that Tagore took the discussion of the nature of the ultimate reality to a decisive conclusion by casting doubt on the Advaita understanding of the Absolute and his relation to the world. It has also become axiomatic with Gandhi that God is revealed in his significance for humanity. When he was in England for the Round Table Conference the Columbia Gramophone Company

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1. Sadhana, p. 16.

2. Ibid., p. 20.

3. Ibid., p. 63

4. Ibid., p. 41.

5. As cited in V.S. Naravane, op. cit., p. 136, fn. 121.

asked him to make a recording, and he read an article on God which he had written for Young India: "In the midst of death, life persists. In the midst of untruth, truth persists. In the midst of darkness, light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love. He is the Supreme Good ..... God to be God must rule the heart and transform it".<sup>1</sup> All this makes it clear that Gandhi's understanding of the relation of God to the world comes very close to Bultmann's existentialist theological concern to relate the noumenon to phenomena, the Absolute to existence. For Bultmann the affirmation of the existence of God cannot be understood as a universal, theoretical, and objective truth, "apart from our own existence". For "it is not feasible to think of God as the world-principle on the basis of which the world and our own existence along with the world becomes comprehensible".<sup>2</sup> It is this understanding of God and of his relation to the world at which both modern Hindu theologians' thought and Bultmann's thought most readily meet.

It is remarkable that the Christian concept of God as Creator of the universe appears prominently in the writings of both Tagore and Radhakrishnan. As has been stated above, Tagore maintained that God is personal where he creates. He writes: "God finds himself by creating".<sup>3</sup> He elsewhere writes: "God's love from which our self has taken form has made it separate

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1. As quoted by G. Ashe, Gandhi : A Study in Revolution, p. 310.

2. Faith and Understanding I, pp. 59-60.

3. Tagore, Stray Birds (London, 1917), p. 12.

from God".<sup>1</sup> He points out that the phenomenon of the Infinite finding itself in the finite is apparently a paradox. But "it is a paradox that lies at the root of existence".<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan's understanding of the relation of God to the world has two facets: (i) As the ablest exponent of Sankara's monism he upholds the concept of the Absolute as the universal Spirit; and (ii) as a theist he firmly believes that the ultimate reality is the Creator of the universe. This can be seen in the following passages. He writes: "He [the Absolute] is the universal Spirit who creates and is aware of the contents of the universe".<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere he explains that "the great problem of the philosophy of religion has been the reconciliation of the character of the Absolute as in a sense eternally complete with the character of God as a self-determining principle manifested in a temporal development which includes nature and man".<sup>4</sup> He declares: "Only a complete apprehension of reality as a whole can justify the hypothesis that God is and he is the creator of all".<sup>5</sup> He adds: "The work of the world is not the result of chance or thoughtlessness, but is simply the outcome of God's nature. Out of the fullness of his joy, God scatters abroad life and power".<sup>6</sup> Aurobindo thought of the relation of God to the world as follows: "The affirmation of a divine life upon earth ..... can have no

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1. Sadhana, p. 87.

2. Personality, p. 55.

3. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy II, p. 498.

4. An Idealist View of Life, p. 343.

5. Indian Philosophy II, p. 542.

6. Ibid., p. 551.

base unless we recognize not only the eternal Spirit as the inhabitant of the bodily mansion, the weaver of this mutable robe, but accept Matter of which it is made, as a fit noble material out of which He weaves constantly His garbs, ...."<sup>1</sup> For him, the ultimate reality as in its essence is utterly transcendent and indescribable. But from human point of view, the Reality has a three-fold character: "The highest experience of this Reality in the universe shows it to be not only a conscious Existence, but a supreme Intelligence and Force and as a self-existent Bliss".<sup>2</sup>

All this however does not warrant us to say that all recent Hindu intellectuals subscribe to these writers' understanding of God as Creator of the universe. For some, the universe exists from eternity. Vivekananda points out that the word 'creation' in its Judaeo-Christian sense is absent in Sanskrit "since there is no school of thought in India believing in a creation in the sense the word has in the West: that something springs from nothing".<sup>3</sup> For Nikhilandanda, what is called creation is merely the transformation of energy to names and forms (namarupa) and this feature of the world process hypnotizes us into believing in the existence of the manifold.<sup>4</sup>

But from the foregoing quotations of Tagore, Radhakrishnan and Aurobindo two inferences can be drawn: (1) Their under-

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1. The Life Divine I, p. 8.

2. Ibid., p. 49.

3. As quoted in Religions of Mankind - Today and Yesterday, p. 342.

4. cf. Ibid., p. 342.

standing of God is perhaps not dissimilar to one of the propositions of the existentialist theology of Bultmann, viz. God is not known to speculative thought; (2) their understanding of God can be regarded as a real advance in that it pinpoints the growing tendency to uphold the idea of the Creator-creature relationship while playing down the pantheistic view of God and breaking away from the full-fledged Idealistic scheme of Sankara. However, their new concept of God stops short of an important aspect of the ultimate reality, viz. the definition of God should allow his ontological status. It is true that the Bible itself does not speak of what God is like in himself but for Paul the being of God, what God is in himself was manifest in what he has done for mankind in Christ. It is true that faith be it Hindu or Christian concerns existence, but it (faith) is also knowledge and contemplation of God. For Paul it is God who has raised Jesus from the dead, Rom. 4:24, 8:11, 10:9; I Cor. 6:14; Gal. 1:1. Paul's message is the Gospel of Christ, I Cor. 9:12, II Cor. 2:12, 4:4, 9:13. And precisely because it is the Gospel of Christ it is also the Gospel of God, Rom. 1:1, 15:16; I Thes. 2:8, 9.

Paul's understanding of the relation of God to the world does not spring merely from his concept of man in his historical existence but from his new understanding of God in Christ. That is, Paul's theological language springs from "his standing in the grace". He declares: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me ..... I do not nullify the grace of God; .....", Gal. 2:20-21a. This language in turn, springs from his new understanding of the relation of the Gospel to

the Law and his concept of the new era inaugurated by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Further, from his understanding of the Adam-Christ relationship, Rom. 5:12ff. it can be implied that Paul has not written a theoretical anthropology which can be studied in isolation from the rest of his thought. That is, in Paul there is, indeed, a definite knowledge of God which lies behind much of what he says about man in his historical existence. And on the other hand, the interrelation of his understanding of man with Christology and ecclesiology seems to be the over-all scheme of Paul's thought.

Perhaps a case can be made for the idea that we can legitimately make objective statements about the being of God. In this connection it is pertinent to recall the remark of William Hordern when he comments on the statement of the writer of the first Epistle of John, i.e. God is love: "We can ask whether this statement is objectively true or only an expression of John's feeling. Of course John's statement is not "objective" in the sense of a scientist's statement that "iron is metal", but there is an appropriate use of "objective" in this context".<sup>1</sup> If one really wants to know what Paul's teaching of God is one has to turn to a consistent exegesis of Paul's phrases relating to God's righteousness. Properly speaking, the phrase <sup>2</sup>ἐκ δικαιοσύνης εἰς δικαιοσύνην, Rom. 1:17 and the similar formulation <sup>3</sup>διὰ δικαιοσύνην τοῦ θεοῦ διὰ δικαιοσύνης, Rom. 3:22 make plain what Paul means by God's righteousness.

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1. William Hordern, Speaking of God (London, 1964), p. 157.



The implication is that God's righteousness is essentially tied up with faith. Further, God's righteousness becomes in some sense man's when he turns to God in his response of faith. To put it differently, God's righteousness is a gift given to man on the condition of the surrender of his self to him. This is one aspect of it. But there is another aspect as well. Righteousness stands not merely for God's power but also for the character of the giver.<sup>1</sup> Paul's statement that God in Christ is reconciling the world unto himself, II Cor. 5:19 explains the fact that Paul infers what God is like from a change in the situation of the world. He thus establishes the necessity of theology.

Interestingly enough, Radhakrishnan explains the philosophy of religion in existential categories. He writes: "The religions of the world can be distinguished into those which emphasize the object and those which insist on experience. For the first class religion is an attitude of faith and conduct directed to a power without. For the second it is an experience to which the individual attaches supreme value". For Hindus and Buddhists "it [religion] is more a transforming experience than a notion of God. Real religion can exist without a definite conception of the deity but not without a distinction between the spiritual and the profane, the sacred

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1. The double-sidedness is well set out by Sanday and Headlam, also by Althaus.<sup>2</sup> cf. W. Sanday and A.C. Headlam, The Epistle to the Romans, 5th ed. (Edinburgh, 1902), p. 24f.

2. P. Althaus comments: All that God has he gives and what he gives is himself (Alles was Gott hat, das gibt er, und was er gibt, das ist er selbst).<sup>3</sup> cf. P. Althaus, Der Brief an die Römer, 8th ed. (Göttingen, 1954), p. 12f.

and the secular ..... In theistic systems the essential thing is not the existence of the deity, but its power to transform man ..... Belief and conduct, rites and ceremonies, authorities and dogma, are assigned a place subordinate to the art of conscious self-discovery and contact with the divine".<sup>1</sup>

The statement: "Real religion can exist without a definite conception of the deity but not without distinction between ..... the sacred and the secular" obviously points to the idea that the existentialist theological landmark of our age can be found in the writings of recent Indian thinkers, not to say that the whole passage strikes the keynote of Radhakrishnan's religious thought. The phrase "its (deity's) power to transform man" pinpoints the idea that the Creator-creature relationship concerns the transformation that takes place in the creature. We may fully accept this important concept as this is not dissimilar to the Pauline teaching on salvation. But the question is whether this concept of religious experience says anything about God. Man's awareness of his finitude must, of necessity, lead him to think of transcendence in terms of infinitude as being the ultimate limit of human experience. At this point the question inevitably arises whether the warrant of acceptability of the limitation of language about God is not the eventual outcome of an abstraction of the distinction between Time and Eternity. From the viewpoint of

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1, Eastern Religions and Western Thought, p. 21.

human existence - the self-consciousness of man's necessary ability and obligation to be a self we can justifiably reflect upon the nature of the ultimate being in the sense of rational Christian theology. Moreover, we can safely suggest that human conscience and reason can be the effective means of an objective affirmation about the being of God. This is brought more clearly into view by William Temple when he observes that "to deny that revelation can, and in the long run must, on pain of becoming manifest as superstition, vindicate its claim by satisfying reason and conscience, is fanatical. But that revelation is altogether other than rational inference from previous experience is vitally important; that only by revelation and by his surrender to its spiritual power can man be "saved", is a profound and irrefragable truth; .....".<sup>1</sup>

If it is a valid observation that Pauline understanding of God necessitates a genuinely theological concept of reality it follows that the biblical understanding of God must be made more intelligible to "enlightened Hindus ..... who had themselves outgrown the myths of popular Hinduism".<sup>2</sup> India's religious thought in its modern form is full of cross-currents and therefore their understanding of God is often elusive or eclectic. The concept of God as an 'avatar' (an incarnation of God, occurring when the state of the world seems to call for it) immediately comes to the mind of any Hindu the moment you begin to talk about the being of God or more often than

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1. William Temple, Nature, Man and God, p. 396.

2. J.W. Grant, God's People in India, p. 16.

not, God is thought to be 'absolute' reality or the chief of the gods and so on. The attempts made by several Indian Christian thinkers to explain the incarnation of our Lord as "the Supreme avatar" or Jesus, "the eternal avatar"<sup>1</sup> have not been acceptable to many and of late, were called in question.<sup>2</sup> In any case, just as there is an urgent need in Christian theology for the rearticulation of the Pauline emphasis on language about God so also in nascent Hindu thought there is the need for developing a new understanding of God which includes not only the canons of existential interpretation

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1. See R.H.S. Boyd, op. cit., p. 175.

2. George Johnston observes: "His unique role cannot be surrendered to any avatar or any prophet. In his life, death and resurrection our whole message consists".

3. George Johnston, "Christian Mission and Christ's prevenience", *Theology To-day*, Vol. XX (1963-64), p. 41. Also, from the standpoint of Hindu idea of Jesus as one of the Avatars as a Christian reaction to Swami Akhilananda's exposition of the word avatara and his explanation of the death and resurrection of Jesus to fit him into Hindu understanding of the avatara, S.J. Samartha observes: "It would be foolish if we wanted to force upon them [the death and resurrection of Jesus] meanings borrowed from elsewhere. He who describes Good Friday as a symbol for the fact that Christ had let 'his empirical self' be crucified and that the resurrection is a proof for the power of the spirit over the body through the realization of the truth does not find himself in harmony with the tone of the New Testament and with the faith of the Church through the centuries", my tr. (Es wäre töricht, wenn wir anderswo entlehene Bedeutungen ihnen aufzwingen wollten. Wer den Karfreitag als Sinnbild dafür beschreibt, daß Christus "Sein empirisches selbst" habe kreuzigen lassen, und daß die Auferstehung ein Beweis "für die Kraft des Geistes über den Körper durch die Verwirklichung der Wahrheit", der befindet sich nicht im Einklang mit dem Grundton des Neuen Testaments und dem Glauben der Kirche durch die Jahrhunderte hindurch").

4. S.J. Samartha, Hindus vor dem Universalen Christus (Stuttgart, 1970), pp. 81-82.

of the God-man relationship but also a genuinely theological concept of reality "as it is possible to discuss the ontological status of God without getting into that illegitimate kind of objectifying which Bultmann justly fears".<sup>1</sup>

B. Modern Hindu theologians' understanding of the God-man relationship:

Modern Hindu theologians' concept of the actual relation between God and man underlines two basic notions, namely the man-ward aspect of religion and man's salvation being attained by human effort and self-discipline. The essence of the Gītā which in modern times has acquired an independent position in the consciousness and piety of the people is apparently found in the verse, XI:55: He who does work for Me, he who looks upon Me as his goal, he who worships Me, free from attachment, who is free from enmity to all creatures, he goes to Me, O Pāṇḍava (Arjuna)".<sup>2</sup> Of the three-fold path of salvation, i.e. Jñāna-Marga (the path of insight), Karma-Marga (the path of action); and the Bhakti-Marga (the path of devotion, personal commitment to God) the third way is considered to be open to all. This essential teaching of the Gītā about man's salvation is summarized by Vivekananda as follows: "When a man reaches the stage where he loves everyone and is ready to give his life for an animal without desiring any reward, then his heart is purified".<sup>3</sup> By the phrase "ready to give his life

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1. J. Macquarrie, "Bultmann's understanding of God", The Expos. Times, Volume The Seventy-Ninth (1967-68), p. 360.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, The Bhagavadgītā, p. 289.

3. As quoted in Religions of Mankind - Today and Yesterday, p. 344.

for an animal without desiring any reward" Vivekananda emphatically defends much of what is implied in the concept of nishkamakarma (action without thought for a reward) and this, on his account, is the outcome of a purified heart which is inversely achieved through one's own self-directed efforts. This view of salvation embodies two trains of thought; on the one hand, ultimately the individual has to be responsible for himself to attain salvation; and on the other hand, the moment of enlightenment comes to him in isolation - hence true freedom may be said to be individualistic in the traditional sense of the term.

With respect to the former, there is a clear train of argument, i.e. the self is not given ready-made; it has to be acquired by discipline and devoted spirit. In this sense the responsibilities and actualities of man become a matter of great importance. If we say that man is primarily responsible for the actuality of his authentic life we then probably overplay the man-ward aspect of religion. In so doing the immense problem of man's essential relation to God is solved from the point of view of anthropology. One cannot resist the conclusion that on the idea of divine operation in one's religious experience modern Hindu theologians lay very little emphasis. What this amounts to is little more than existentialism for which "there is no meaning in life and no moral standards except what man can himself create".<sup>1</sup> Of course this is the basic existentialist position and there is an

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1. "Talking Points from Books", The Expos. Times, Volume The Eighty-First (1969-70), p. 259.



essential and a marked difference between this position and the existentialist theology of the Bultmannian school of thought which continually insists that authentic life is given to Dasein as a gift from God. It is precisely in this sense that modern Hindu notion of the man-ward aspect of religion is different from Bultmann's understanding of faith.

With this in mind, let us now penetrate a little deeper into Pauline anthropology to see whether his Christian thought stresses any other facets of philosophy of religion neglected by Hindu theology in its modern form. What is Paul's most important and characteristic contribution to Christian anthropology? In order to clarify this question we have to turn to his understanding of the role of the Spirit, viz. the exegesis of Pauline texts wherein the work of the Spirit is referred to. At the outset let us state our premise: Paul views the Spirit as active in the individual's act of faith and sanctification of the believer united with Christ through faith.

But before we actually deal with this in detail it may well be necessary for us to make a brief survey of the scheme of thinking of Indian Christian theologians with a view to investigate the question whether they had run into a mist of ambiguities with respect to the role of the Spirit. It is notable that of all Indian Christian thinkers Chenchiah and Chakkarai most significantly set themselves to re-apprehend and re-address the meaning of the role of the Spirit in a manner relevant to the forms of thought of the Hindu intellectuals. The summary teaching of Chenchiah on the work of

the Spirit is as follows: "The Holy Spirit is the new cosmic energy; the Kingdom of God the new order; the children of God the new type that Christ has inaugurated. The Gospel is that God in Jesus has made a new creation .....".<sup>1</sup> Chenchiah apparently explained the doctrine and personality of the Spirit in terms of the mighty power of God, the power-house. He writes: "After Christ we do not abide in the woods of God-realization: we search for the waterfalls of God, that would release the new energy for the transformation of the world".<sup>2</sup>

On the basis of these statements two observations can be made: (i) Chenchiah rightly views the Holy Spirit as of God's power and suggests that a conscious submission to and use of that power must be made by the individual in order to make his life more dynamic. (ii) From this it does not follow that the Holy Spirit is the "new cosmic energy". We may fully agree with him in so far as he holds fast to the idea of cosmic redemption, world theology as spelled out by Paul in Rom. 8:18 ff. But if we work out the full implications of Chenchiah's idea of the Spirit as the new cosmic spirit his apologetic suffers ~~from~~ one peculiarity, namely he overstates the comparison between the Holy Spirit and the divine sakti as mahaskati, 'great power' as found in Hindu scriptures.

Chakkarai, on the other hand, not only looks upon the work of the Holy Spirit as a continuing part of the incarnation of Christ but also sees no objection to the identification of

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1. As quoted in R.H.S. Boyd, op. cit., p. 156.

2. As quoted in R.H.S. Boyd, op. cit., p. 158.

the Spirit with the risen, living Christ at work in the world today. He, in fact, goes a step further than this. He affirms: "It is from the Holy Spirit our antaryamin, the Indweller, that we start our enquiry concerning the nature of the person of Jesus".<sup>1</sup> Particularly with regard to the relation between Jesus and the Spirit Chakkarai affirms: "The Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ Himself, taking His abode within us ..... The starting point in consciousness of the Christian disciple is that the Holy Spirit is Jesus Himself".<sup>2</sup>

From these statements it can be seen that Chakkarai's understanding of the Spirit as compared with the risen Jesus at work in the world today certainly accords with the New Testament teaching on the Spirit, particularly with Pauline teaching on the same, viz. the Christ became  $\alpha\tau\tau\upsilon\epsilon\sigma\mu\alpha\ \gamma\omega\sigma\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ , I Cor. 15.45. It is certainly arguable, on Chakkarai's account, that the Holy Spirit can be understood in terms of the Indweller Rom. 8:11. However, his interpretation of the Spirit as the antaryamin (inner controller) in the sense the word has in Hindu scriptures is surely open to question. It is one thing to say that the Spirit is the risen Jesus at work in the world today and it is another thing to say that the Spirit is the antaryamin, for once one begins to speak of the role of the Spirit in terms of antaryamin one is falling into the fallacy of <sup>a</sup>pantheistic view of God, i.e. the spirit in the divine be-

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1. As quoted in R.H.S. Boyd, op. cit., p. 173.

2. As quoted in Ibid., p. 173.

ing of the universe and the spirit in human being are one and the same, only the universal Spirit is world power or more powerful than the human spirit. With respect to the Hindu understanding of the soul (atman) "every individual soul is a reflection of the world soul, ....."<sup>1</sup> Here the logical fallacy is surely obvious as the more judicious understanding of Paul's concept of the Spirit makes it clear: "A distinction between the human and divine spirits is worked out for the first time ..... It was a Pauline creation".<sup>2</sup> So much for Indian Christian theologians' understanding of the Spirit.

Let us now look at a closer range Pauline texts to see whether Paul's anthropology has given a foothold to those who wish to deny completely the role of the Spirit as being the necessary element in the individual's act of faith. It is true that Paul never develops a theoretical pneumatology as such but that does not warrant us to set aside his understanding of the divine operation in terms of the Spirit, the historical power in the community. Certainly Paul's idea of the God-man relationship gains a new depth of meaning if we emphasize, as Funk observes "Paul's basic theological tenet: God comes to man in his Word".<sup>3</sup> It may, however, be safely asserted, as Stalder points out, that for Paul "the revelation of God in Jesus Christ can at the same time be hidden in spite of all

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1. Religions of Mankind - Today and Yesterday, p. 343.

2. R. Jewett, Paul's Anthropological Terms, p. 451.

3. R.W. Funk, "Phenomenology of Language and the New Testament", The Journal of Bible and Religion, Vol. XXXIV. (1966), p. 212.

preaching. It must be made known in the Spirit; the unspiritual man does not understand thereby, even though his ears hear it (I Cor. 2)." . . . "The testimony of God is the content of Paul's message. Hence it follows that the problem of Paul's understanding of the Spirit is always to be laid hold of in consideration to his witness of God".<sup>1</sup> Paul declares that he appeared in Corinth "in demonstration of the Spirit and power", that their "faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God", I Cor. 2:4f. This makes it clear that true Word, power and the Spirit are interrelated concepts of Paul's preaching. The exegesis of the passage I Thes. 1:5-6 particularly makes it plain that it was in power and in the Holy Spirit that Paul's message reached the Thessalonians and there the text shows that . . . . . they received the word in much affliction, with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, *μετὰ χάρις πνεύματος ἁγίου* which certainly recalls *ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ*. Further, Paul's statement that 'we speak of those gifts of God in words found for us not by our human wisdom but by the Spirit, I Cor. 2:13 (NEB Tr.) serves to illustrate the manner of Paul's teaching on the role of the Spirit.

Paul's underlying presupposition is that man should live in humble believing obedience on God but he is also obviously

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1. Kurt Stalder, Das Werk Des Geistes in Der Heiligung Bei Paulus (Bern, 1961), pp. 12, and 17, my tr. (Die Offenbarung Gottes in Jesus Christus kann bei aller Predigt gleichwohl verborgen bleiben. Sie muß im Heiligen Geist erkannt werden; der psychische Mensch vernimmt nichts davon, obwohl seine Ohren die Botschaft auch hören (I Cor. 2). "Das Zeugnis von Gott ist der Inhalt der Paulinischen Botschaft. - Daraus folgt, daß bei der Frage nach dem Geistverständnis des Paulus immer auf sein Zeugnis von Gott Bedacht zu nehmen ist).

aware of the fact that man refuses to accept that utter dependence upon God which his creatureliness connotes. How man can live in complete obedience to God is the central issue of our understanding of our religious experience. In Paul's language the divine way of obedience is described as being free from the Law and open to God's grace. What Paul expressly emphasizes is that the divine way of obedience means the end of legalism (one's efforts to achieve true selfhood), and the life in Christ, united with him by faith, and quickened by the Spirit. It is in this sense that Paul's phrase 'the power of the Spirit' becomes intelligible. Surely this expression 'the power of the Spirit' gains in significance if it is recognized that Paul knows very well that man cannot make up his mind to change his way to this divine way of obedience. Paul's correlation of divine power and the power of the Holy Spirit is nowhere clearer than in Rom. 15:18 wherein Paul declared that he was able to win the obedience from the Gentiles by word and deed, ..... and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, it will be noted that the Jew could not get away from the idea of the objective reality of the Spirit as being the divine operation at work in history any more than he could get away from the idea of flesh, i.e. the evil impulse <sup>73 7</sup> as the source of sin in the human race. <sup>Same</sup> Hence, Paul holds the idea of the flesh, sin that dwells within me - nothing good dwells, that is, in my flesh, Rom. 7:17, 18, (it will be remembered that the question whether the passage in Rom. 7:14 ff. speaks of the pre-Christian or Christian experience of Paul



is still a debatable issue). If for the Jew, sin was associated with flesh, it would be all the more true of a Jew, Paul in particular, who moved in Hellenistic circles. It would be inescapably true to say that Paul must have readily adopted thought-forms of the day in order to explain the Christ-event and the role of the Spirit; the latter being a part of the whole. Moreover, in the Rabbinic view, as Schweizer explains, "the personal categories used to describe the activity of the Spirit are not designed to present Him as a special heavenly being but rather to bring out the fact that He is an objective divine reality which encounters and claims man ..... The decisive thing is that man stands here before a reality which comes from God, which in some sense represents the presence of God, and yet which is not identical with God ..... The Spirit is God's Spirit and is sent by God".<sup>1</sup>

In short, the characteristic feature of Paul's anthropology is that confrontation between God and man is possible; the whole man is at stake when confronted by God and at the same time man's faculties are such that he cannot make the required unconditional surrender to God; and yet in order to make this surrender possible man's faculties require awakening or quickening by divine power which is nothing less than the Spirit of God, the historical power in the community. Schweizer observes that for Paul, "Christ, ....., must Himself be called  $\pi\tau\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ , and, though this is formally a statement about His substance, materially it is a statement about His power, i.e., His sig-

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1. Th. D.N.T. VI, 387-88.

nificance for the community".<sup>1</sup>

In his attempt to re-address the meaning of Paul's anthropology in a manner relevant to the anthropology of recent Indian thought the Christian apologist must, of necessity, make a substantial case for Paul's expression given to divine operation. Only thus can he show that divine operation and human response of faith (the aspect of human freedom) are held in balance and thereby he need not draw the same conclusion as the wholehearted champions and exponents of existentialist theology do, namely having said that the whole man is at stake when confronted by God there is no more to be said in the matter of the individual's act of faith.

This now brings us to the discussion of the second aspect of the individual's salvation in modern Hindu thought. Even with the rise of renaissance<sup>2</sup> of ancient Hindu culture and religion an uncompromisingly individualistic salvation was still noticeable in the writings of some modern Hindu intellectuals like Pandit Mahabhagavat who held that "it is an impertinence to seek anything but one's own salvation. There is great spiritual danger in thinking that the world is in need of our help".<sup>3</sup>

However, this traditional individualistic salvation is no

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1. Th. D. N.T. VI, p. 417.

2. The recognition of the Christian concept of the value of personality, the efforts to uplift the depressed classes, to raise the status of women, to abolish child-marriage and the devadasi system (religious prostitution) can be mentioned as some aspects of the renaissance of Hinduism.

3. As cited in A.C. Underwood, Contemporary Thought of India (London, 1930), p. 149.

longer thought to be the general feeling of the religio-philosophical thinkers of nascent Hinduism like Radhakrishnan, Gandhi, Aurobindo, Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. That is, one of the insights of these men is that they under the spell of the Christian idea of society learned to imbue the structure of modern Hinduism with ethical ideas of human solidarity and called for modification of classical Hindu ethics. It is not an exaggeration to say that Radhakrishnan, "the Ambassador-General of Indian culture"<sup>1</sup> as W. Perston calls him, offers more structural assistance to this new trend of thinking which stresses the role of the individual in society over against the traditional individualistic concept of salvation.

This can be seen from the way Radhakrishnan interprets the ancient Tat Tvam asi (That art Thou) in agreement with Paul Deussen's comment on the ancient Hindu scriptures "you must love your neighbour as yourself, because you are your neighbour. It is an illusion making you believe that your neighbour is anything but yourself".<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan elsewhere writes: "The liberated individual works for the welfare of the world ..... Love to God expresses itself in love to creation ..... He [the sage] is conscious of the wider destiny of the universe".<sup>3</sup> The Christian Church in India cannot afford to ignore the incentive which Radhakrishnan's writings give to the vast majority of people in India to lay stress upon

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1. W. Perston, "Christian Theology and Vedanta", International Review of Missions, Vol. XLIV (1955), p. 153.

2. As quoted in Religions of Mankind - Today and Yesterday, p. 344.

3. Eastern Religions and Western Thought, pp. 100-1.

religious and ethical values of society. For Tagore, "To live the life of goodness is to live the life of all".<sup>1</sup> A genuine concern for the welfare of the whole is a dominant feature of modern Hindu theology and this is because the intelligentsia of modern India have come to realize that those who seek to save their lives in isolation will lose them.

Another feature of renascent Hinduism is that of its emphasis upon the love element - 'the way of love' as being plainly a preparation for one's true selfhood. In this connection it is pertinent to recall the comment of R.C. Zaehner: "In the modern Hindu revivalist sects, particularly in the Ramakrishna Mission they the philosophically minded tend to speak indifferently of 'self-realization and 'God-realization'".<sup>2</sup>

Under the leadership of Vivekananda, Ramakrishnan Mission called for radical modification in society. That is, his urging people to humanitarian and compassionate action is significant and praiseworthy. His own words are: "He who serves all beings serves God indeed".<sup>3</sup> The Sarvodaya Movement whose principal concern is 'the welfare of all' is vigorously carrying on its programme of land distribution to the landless in the country.

All this goes to show that the "enlightened" of renascent Hinduism have played a highly significant role in stressing this spontaneous social concern within Hinduism - they saw

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1. Sadhana, pp. 56-57.

2. R.C. Zaehner "Learning from Other Faiths: 1 Hinduism" The Expos. Times, March 1972 Volume LXXX-III No.6, p.168.

3. As quoted by W. Stewart, India's Religious Frontier, p. 89.

the final concerns in social rather than in purely personal dimensions. Thus their new ethics marks a real advance on the classical idea of one's own true freedom as achieved in isolation. In this sense there can be discerned a striking affinity between Hindu theology in its modern form and the anthropology of Paul who never thinks of man in purely individualistic terms. Indeed, he sees the redeemed man as part of the corporate community.

But reflection prompts further questions, namely can this new dimension of life in recent Hindu theology come close to the Pauline perspective on corporate community? This question may be replaced by a more practical one. Can the Hindu faith in its nascent form have a doctrine of Church in the sense of fellowship expressed in the corporate act of common worship which is considered to be the indispensable focus of the community's life? Can it put "a visible human community in the centre of its creed"? It is true that Radhakrishnan advanced the idea that the meaning of history is to make all men prophets to establish a kingdom of free spirits. But it might be asked whether this kingdom of free spirits can be squared with "corporate Samadhi"<sup>1</sup> if there is any such thing even in present day Hinduism?

The late Dr. P.D. Devadanandan, motivated by an apologetic concern pointed out that in Hinduism "there can, ....., be no such community as the Church claims itself to be, where there is an inflow and outflow of personal influence which is trans-

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1. I owe these expressions to Bishop J.E.L. Newbigin, A Faith for this One World? (London, 1961), pp. 40-41.

forming, .....".<sup>1</sup> Corporate fellowship of the community of believers united with Christ who have the Holy Spirit as the earnest expectation of that which is to come is thought to be embodied in Paul's phrase "in Christ" which is not the same as the experience of the pure selfhood which is none other than the individual's integral experience on which both Radhakrishnan and Aurobindo constantly insist.

#### C. Modern Hindu theologians' concept of history:

It is now time to discuss the last theme of this chapter, namely the concept of history in recent Indian thinking. We have seen in the second chapter how in fact the outstanding thinkers of modern India have developed their view of history. The main purpose of taking up the same theme at this place is to examine more closely how deeply modern Hindu thought concerns itself with a historical method and assess it from the standpoint of the Pauline view of the God-man relationship so that the current Indian theology can take account of the full swing of all the tides of thought of modern India.

It is probably correct to say that within the framework of the anthropology of Hinduism in its modern form the material world is no longer considered to be an illusion and the movement of events interpreted in terms of cyclic view of time is no longer held to be congenial to modern Indian thinkers. Radhakrishnan's view of history comes to very clear expression in the following statements: "Man with his creative acts can

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1. P.D. Devadanandan, The Gospel and Renascent Hinduism (London, 1959), p. 37.



mould the closed circle of nature and disclose its possibilities".<sup>1</sup> He writes: "The scriptures of an earlier age cannot answer the problem of our time. The great representatives of Indian culture were men of mobility and ceaseless adventure. We are not loyal to their spirit if we mark time in a world of perpetual movement by sitting still and chanting ancient hymns.....".<sup>2</sup>

One can discern in this statement Radhakrishnan developing a concept of history. Foremost among the reasons for this new tendency to develop a historical method are that (i) Karma, a concept of unparalleled importance in the development of Hindu religion has been given a new interpretation. That is, over against the fatalistic concept of karma the concept of the freedom of the will is emphasized which Radhakrishnan explains by means of a very suggestive metaphor: Life is a game of bridge. (ii) The traditional concept of Maya has also been reinterpreted in such a way that a negative attitude to the world is no longer held to be the right view of one's historical existence because it excludes a sense of involvement with society. Again, on Radhakrishnan's account, "Māyā does not imply that the world is an illusion or is non-existent absolutely .....".<sup>3</sup> And above all, as we have already seen, for him, man has to fling a flaming torch into the darkness of the future.

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, "Fragments of a Confession" in The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan, p. 59.

2. As quoted in V.S. Naravane, op. cit., p. 261.

3. S. Radhakrishnan, The Bhagavadgītā, p. 38.

It would be unwise to suggest that by this view of history modern Hindu theologians mean a teleological conception of life as against cosmic cycles. Nor would be it correct to say that renascent Hinduism has developed its historical methodology to the same extent as Western existentialism did. It would be an exaggeration to say that they have uniformly developed a concept of history. All we can say is that inasmuch as they tacitly recognize the weight of the criticism of the West that Hindu cyclic view of time is still overriding all other considerations of their world-view the philosophically minded are changing the lineaments of their culture and forms of thought. It is in this sense that we have to understand the viewpoint of history of the elite of modern India. As we have seen, Radhakrishnan's view of history is orientated to the individual's use of his freedom. He writes "By a change in mental and spiritual disposition, we can ..... prepare for ourselves a new destiny. It depends on us whether we take the rake's line downhill to destruction or the pilgrim's progress upward".<sup>1</sup>

Besides, as Cogley points out, "these men have been exposed to Christian influence or have been "secularized" in the Western sense of the term".<sup>2</sup> Therefore their thought is characterized by the modification of old certitudes and the throwing away of old ways of thinking and this may suggest that they have begun to take seriously the thought of the modern world.

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, "My Search for Truth", in Religion in Transition, pp. 52-53.

2. J. Cogley, Religion in a Secular Age, p. 12.

It is now necessary to take up the discussion of the question whether the idea of a providential ordering of the universe makes sense to modern Hindu theologians. Do they think in terms of eschatology? Will they accept the idea that divine purpose is being worked out in history? We have seen that most of them, though not all, subscribe to the idea that the universe is the creation of the supreme being. From this does it follow that they also believe that this world is the object of God's concern and that there is some ultimate consummation of the Divine purposes? One might argue that some of the basic assumptions implied in these questions are frankly meaningless to modern theologians of the Hindu faith. If these basic assumptions are not part of the logic of their understanding of history in what way is their concept of history a matter of concern for the Christian apologists? This dilemma or query can be defined yet more sharply. What good reason do the Christian apologists in India have to be concerned about their idea of history? It is precisely because of their stressing of the primacy of personal history against cosmic history that the present study seeks to show the relevance of Paul's anthropology to the anthropology of modern Indian thought.

Paul views the Christ-event as an event of decisive significance for mankind. Paul's understanding of the Adam-Christ relationship makes it obvious that the reconciliation wrought through the Christ-event embraces all creation and the whole of mankind. Basic to Paul's position is that through the obedience of One the many who will be established as righteous will not merely be given the standing of righteous but

really be righteous. On his showing the Christ-event has opened the possibility of the change of relationship between God and man and in his language, as Barrett comments, both "sinners" and "righteous" are "words of relationship", not character".<sup>1</sup> A careful study of Paul's (scheme of) concepts shows that "to belong to Christ" is to be a member of the ultimate eschatological order which is to be consummated. Understood from this point of view of history Paul certainly thought in terms of the ultimate consummation of the Divine purposes. This implies that Paul had anticipated the end of history when God will be all in all, I Cor. 15:28, or to use our twentieth century language, "the wholeness of reality will come to light".<sup>2</sup>

Let us now examine some of the statements of the champions of modern Hindu thought on history. In the second chapter we touched on the existentialist interpretation of history as an Eastern corollary of the Western existentialist interpretation of history. Here we explain more fully the same topic with a view to show how best we can bring out the relevance of Paul's anthropology to that of nascent Hinduism. J. Moltmann observes: "Heidegger's existentialist interpretation of history as a science ..... seeks to construct the idea of history from the 'historicality' of Dasein".<sup>3</sup> As compared with this view of history we find not dissimilar statements in Radhakrishnan's writings. As we have already discussed his

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1. C.K. Barrett, A Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans (London, 1962), p. 117.

2. Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 277.

3. Jürgen Moltmann, op. cit., p. 256.

view of history we cannot traverse the same ground in detail again. His concept of history comes out most clearly in the following statements: For him, "His [man's] being is open to himself".<sup>1</sup> He observes: "We cannot say that everything is finished before it starts and the last day of reckoning will read what the first day of creation wrote".<sup>2</sup>

In a similar manner Tagore also explains his view of history by his analogy of the picture and the canvas. He insists: "The soul's birth in the spiritual world is not the severance of relationship with what we call nature, but freedom of relationship, .....".<sup>3</sup> As for Tagore's view of human freedom, in Nature, the reigning principle is Determinism, in man it is Freedom. It is this freedom that helps him to "cross nature's bonds".<sup>4</sup> Further, for Tagore, "Man proves his in-born mania for repeated reforms of constitution, for pelting amendments at every resolution proposed by providence".<sup>5</sup> Tagore is convinced that "there is no external means of taking freedom by the throat. It is the inward process of losing ourselves that leads us to it .....".<sup>6</sup>

Gandhi maintained that the autonomy of the human individual must be given supreme worth. He considered society to be a

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1. Religion in a Changing World, p. 67.

2. S. Radhakrishnan, "Fragments of a Confession" in The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan, p. 42.

3. Personality, p. 94.

4. Tagore, Man, Andhra University Lectures (Waltair, 1933), p.4.

5. The Religion of Man, p. 52.

6. As cited by Naravane, op. cit., p. 153.

community of souls rather than of biologically impelled organisms. One of the special merits of Gandhi's philosophy of life is that he laid a consistent emphasis on human freedom. This is indeed admirable when seen from the perspective of classical Hindu understanding of time and of the human being in the scheme of things.

Vivekananda did not subscribe to the popular idea of the world as being "pure illusion". He had little sympathy for those whose concept of Maya was in line with the traditional understanding of the doctrine of Maya. In the popular usage the word Maya often denotes a sense of ignorance, attachment to transitory things, hence the phrase: Caught up in the web of Maya. This view of Maya obviously calls for negative attitude to the world and to use Naravane's expression, "all action has to be abandoned so long as the world is what it is".<sup>1</sup>

For that very reason Vivekananda viewed this attitude as unwarranted. For him, the world has both aspects, - illusion and reality, Nature and Freedom, passion and reason. He disapproved the idea of seeking liberation through escape. His characteristic statement is: "Plunge into the world and learn the world and learn the secret of work. Do not fly from the wheels of the world machine. Stand inside it and see how it functions. You can find a way to come out of it".<sup>2</sup> In point of fact, this view of the world is undoubtedly a remarkable epitomization of the newly developed view of human freedom in

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1. V.S. Naravane, op. cit., p. 94.

2. As cited in Ibid., p. 102.



renascent Hinduism. This reflects the currents of contemporary Indian thinking coming to terms with the modern world. For Vivekananda, man represents the principle of freedom in the highest form. The struggle for freedom is the common basis of all religions and Vivekananda called it, "the first impulse towards becoming religious".<sup>1</sup> Vivekananda firmly believed that the human being cannot relinquish his freedom. This has been referred to earlier.<sup>2</sup> For him, "Freedom is the only condition of growth; take that off, the result will be degeneration".<sup>3</sup>

From all these statements two inferences can be drawn:

(i) India's notable recent philosophers rightly emphasized the datum of human freedom and thereby tried to do justice to the complexity of life - the determinism of nature and freedom of the individual; and (ii) they virtually eliminated the idea of the cosmic perspective of God's futurity in their emphasis on human freedom. And above all, these statements explain one particularly crucial point, namely the idea of 'personal history'. All this may seem admirable seen from recent abstractions of historical study.

But it is nonetheless arguable that 'world-history' may be said to be the arena of the vindication of God's right because he is the Creator of this universe (that this world is God's

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1. As quoted in Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p. 296.

2. See above, p. 153.

3. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda V, 7th ed. (Calcutta, 1959), p. 19.

creation is one of the basic presuppositions of a theistic concept of religion). This is how Paul understood the 'world-history'. This is admirably expressed by J. Moltmann when he observes: "They [the mission and call] reveal and open up to him [man] new possibilities, with the result that he can become what he is not yet and never yet was ..... It [a missionary exposition of the biblical witness to man's history and mission] will not interpret the phenomena of past history on the ground of the possibilities of human existence, but on the contrary, it will interpret the new possibilities of human existence on the basis of the 'phenomenon' of God's promise and mission and of the 'phenomenon' of the resurrection and future of Christ".<sup>1</sup>

In this view of history two important presuppositions come to light: 1) Reality in its totality of continuity and contingency is understood as history; and 2) the supreme being, conceived as personal Will is active in and through phenomenon. If, on the other hand, modern Hindu theologians stress the idea of 'personal history' to the neglect of God's futurity their viewpoint of history does not lead us to see the underlying purpose in movements, individualities and complexes of history. How do we reconcile these two differing views of history? To put it more plainly, where do we draw the line? Perhaps the most satisfactory solution to this problem is to be found in the recognition of the fact that one is necessarily inclusive of the other so as to explain the whole range of

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1. Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, pp. 286, 287-88.

human affairs. This is perhaps one of the most far-reaching insights of Pauline anthropology. How very Pauline this argument is may be elucidated by reference to his texts. The passage in I Cor. 15:24-28 speaks of the advent of the coming Lordship of Christ, the end of history. For Paul, this is perhaps the logical outcome of the premise, the proclamation of the exalted Christ. The proclamation of the Gospel and the mission to the Gentiles are, on his own showing, traced back to the revelation of the exalted Christ, cf. Gal. 1:2ff; I Cor. 9:1, 15:8.

This is not all. There is another important aspect to it. Paul undoubtedly links the Word, Kerygma with power to bestow life and to bring death, cf. I Cor. 1:18; Rom. 1:16; II Cor. 2:14-16. The implication of these verses is that if man turns to God in response of faith upon hearing of the Gospel he receives his genuine life as a gift from God. This makes it obvious that Paul equally emphasizes the idea of man as a self-choosing agent in his historical existence, cf. II Cor. 5:20. It is in this sense that Paul's understanding of existence, 'personal history' becomes more marked. There is thus reason for thinking that for Paul both views (one's historic existence and the cosmic perspective), are to be equally emphasized because both views are sufficiently incisive to solve the final issues of man. This means that even though it cannot be claimed that Paul himself had an explicit philosophy of history yet Christian theology must bring out his statements' latent reference to man's existence. This is the burden of Bultmann's theology. However, Bultmann showed that "the

Pauline view of history is the expression of his view of man: ....."<sup>1</sup> And as we have seen, for him, the core of history is man. This shows that Bultmann emphasized the aspect of 'personal history' to the neglect of the cosmic perspective in Paul. Our conclusion is that the two-fold strand of thought, i.e. 'personal history' and the cosmic perspective implied in Pauline anthropology must be rearticulated with equal emphasis.

In this chapter we focused our attention on three aspects of the anthropology of renascent Hinduism. (i) A new understanding of God. The most important thinkers of modern India no longer tend to take refuge in the appeal to Pantheism but rather stress the idea of God as revealed in the concrete stuff of human living. This is the point at which their existentialist thought and Bultmann's Christian existentialism most readily meet. We showed that however much they stress the importance of the transforming power of God it is beyond dispute that they have not given an adequate consideration to the being of God. This is also true of Bultmann's position. Bultmann has little sympathy for those who make objective statements about God, i.e. talk of God as he is in himself. It is however possible to argue that language about God is not lacking in Pauline anthropology. (ii) In modern Hindu theologians' understanding of the God-man relationship there are two things to be noted. (i) They overplay the man-ward aspect of religious experience. We reached the conclusion

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1. History and Eschatology, p. 41.

that such a totally anthropological approach to the theme of religious experience necessarily carries with it silence on the question of the divine operation. We also noted that this position is not dissimilar to Bultmann's theology although Bultmann leaves open the question of divine operation. There is however another essential and a marked difference between recent Hindu theologians' understanding of the individual's salvation and that of Bultmann, namely for the former it is a matter of a spiritual realization achieved through self-directed and devoted efforts, but for the latter it is a gift from God.

As opposed to their silence on the idea of the divine operation we maintain that in Christian theology be it Western or Indian which supposedly explicates the actual relation between God and man it is important to point out that one must take account of the divine operation in religious experience without which it is not possible for man to live in complete obedience to the supreme being. Paul conceives of this divine operation as nothing less than the Spirit of God, the historical power in the community. 2. The elite of modern India rightly stress the importance of society in relation to the individual. The Christian apologist in India fully agrees with them on this although he would point to the fact that their idea of society stops short of the corporate fellowship of the church, the "corporate Samadhi", to use their terminology. (iii) In their philosophy of history the outstanding thinkers of renascent Hinduism emphasize the dimension of the human freedom. It is remarkable that they rightly

stress the datum of human freedom over against the cyclic view of time. It will nonetheless be pointed out that they stress the importance of 'personal history' to the neglect of the cosmic perspective. It is precisely here that their view of history and that of Bultmann converge. As our reaction against this position we explained that a more judicious examination of Pauline thought brings more clearly into view the fact that 'personal history' and the cosmic perspective are not mutually exclusive strands of his anthropology.



### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the course of this investigation remarkable similarities between Bultmann's thought and that of recent Indian thinkers with respect to man's understanding of himself in the world came into focus.

1. It is highly significant that both schools of thought emphasize the indispensability of decision for historical existence. Still more significant is entirely new interpretation which modern Hindu theologians give to the doctrine of karma. The fatalistic concept of karma is no longer held by them. How do we account for this new interpretation of karma which is opposed to the roots of the traditional concept which lie deep in the Indian mind? It has frequently been contended and is perhaps generally acknowledged that on account of their recognition of the positive value of the Western Christian thought and culture, particularly the Christian concept of human personality the outstanding thinkers of modern India did not rest content with the deterministic concept of karma and were determined to insist on stressing human freedom at all costs.

2. Both systems of thought reject the building of rational systems as the way to truth. Both disclose a sense of risk and commitment which is basic to man's coming to an understanding of himself in relation to transcendental being. It will be profitable to pause here and point out a striking difference between the existentialist theology of Bultmann and modern Hindu scheme of thinking. That is, for Bultmann,

it is essentially faith which intimates transcendent Being as the source of authentic selfhood. In his language this links up more closely with his Kerygmatic theology - the actual occurrence of the Word of God in the preaching of the Church. For him, authentic life is given to Dasein as a gift from God. This is not possible within modern Hindu thought for which man's true freedom is achieved through self-discipline and self purification.

3. As stated above, one particularly crucial point which these two systems of thought brought to light is that man is totally and wholly responsible for himself and therefore is responsible for his true selfhood. It may however be argued that neither system offers a straight answer to the moral and theological objection that this is impossible for man, if unaided, that is, in view of the universal impotence of the human will to make an act of obedient self-commitment to God. Scant respect is paid to the possibility of divine operation in the individual's act of self-surrender to the supreme being. To make matters plainer, however much one concedes to the concept of the inalienable right or power of free choice of the human being the question of how he can decide for the Creator still remains unresolved as long as the idea of divine operation is played down.

Surely, the Pauline perspective on the God-man relationship comes close to the heart of the matter, i.e. the usefulness of his concept of the relation of the Creator-creature cannot be brought out without reference to his pointed expression to divine operation which is nothing less than God's

Spirit. In Paul's understanding the exalted Lord became known in the sphere of Spirit, the power of the historical community. (It is remarkable that the writings of Tagore, Gandhi, Aurobindo Ghosh and Radhakrishnan strike a note parallel to the Pauline understanding of the Creator-creature relationship).

4. It is notable that both schools of thought lay a consistent emphasis on the concept of self-understanding, only different terminology is used by modern Hindu theologians who use phrases like "constant regeneration" and "renunciation" of the self as against the classical concept of self-realization. Further, one of the findings of this investigation is that the learned modern Hindus continually insist on the idea of the self finding its true fulfilment in the collective experience of the community and therefore it is probably correct to say that their position largely scores over Bultmann's concept of one's authentic existence which is individualistic in its essentials. We often find in the writings of the Indian thinkers we studied a more remarkable expression, namely "the liberated individual is conscious of the wider destiny of the universe". We find the emphasis that love for God cannot be complete except in so far as it expresses itself in love for man. In this sense, they come close to Pauline perspective on the positive outgoing love for all, cf. I Cor. 10:33.

We have also discovered in the course of our investigation that Aurobindo's insistence on epistemology as against ontology strikes a point of resemblance with Western existentialism of Heidegger. As there is no sign of the former having

been in any way inspired by the latter for what they share, it must be said that they reached the same conclusion quite independently.

5. Another remarkable parallel between Bultmann's thought and recent Indian thinking concerns their historiological presuppositions, viz. they emphasize the idea of 'personal history' as against the linear view of history. In the final chapter of this thesis we have however made it particularly plain that modern Hindu theologians have not made in their historiology so ~~through-~~going an advance as Bultmann did. This indicates that their view of history as implying 'personal history' is in the making. As a reaction against this view of 'personal history' found in both the systems we have registered our opinion that it is part of Paul's understanding of the 'world history' to emphasize equally two view of history - 'personal history and the cosmic perspective.

6. In the final analysis, one is obviously struck by the remarkable parallel between Bultmann's existentialist theology and modern Hindu theology, namely their understanding of transcendence took a fresh distinction in that they explained the ultimate reality as a principle of concretion. Nonetheless, one cannot escape the feeling that these systems of thought lay an unwarranted emphasis on the limitation of language about God, viz. a rational explanation of the ontological status of the ultimate being. For them an affirmation about the being of God in his reality for us is possible only in the light of human existence. Statements about God can be made 'only in existential involvement' in Bultmann's language.

This means that the idea of God in his own, inner, proper reality is an abstraction which Bultmann strongly opposes. As opposed to mythological language about God Bultmann conceives the being and action of God on the analogy of human action. He continually insists that the object of faith cannot be restricted to concepts or rationality. This attempt has been called into question for he could not establish a satisfactory relationship between theology and philosophy. His and modern Hindu thinkers' strict adherence to an anthropological approach to the philosophy of religion necessarily implies silence on the question of God. For that very reason, Bultmann's theology needs for its completion this balance (the relationship between the conceptual clarification of theological speech, viz. ontology and phenomenology) for theology properly speaking, requires that faith and reason, man's spiritual and intellectual capacities must be kept in mind. Theology, be it systematic or existentialist must keep these two spheres of human life in a "proper balance".

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